

THE FORUM AND • CENTURY

November

THE LESSON OF THE MORRO CASTLE

BY WILLIAM MCFEE

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IMPORTANT INSURANCE AGAINST THE FUTURE

Our standard bottled-in-bond (as distinguished from pre-prohibition) stocks of famous old whiskeys will soon be available, including such favorites as Old Taylor, Old Grand Dad, Blue Grass, Old McBrayer, Black Gold, Bourbon de Luxe, Sunny Brook, Mount Vernon, Old Ripy, Bond & Lillard and Boone's Knoll. As a safeguard of quality and adequacy of supply in future we are selecting and retiring for aging between 25,000,000 and 30,000,000 gallons from this year's distillations.

The last roundup from our pre-prohibition casks.. *all 16 to 18 years old..*

And it won't be long before they're just a memory

SOME time ago we announced in this magazine that we still had a limited stock of pre-prohibition Old Grand Dad and Old Taylor (16 to 18 years old) in our bonded warehouses at Louisville. And we urged people to hurry if they wanted some.

Whiskey so rare as this is really "occasion" whiskey—not for the everyday cocktail or highball, but for the unusual occasion

Apparently people *did* want some, and hurried. We haven't a bottle of either left—though we understand you can still find a case or so, here and there, in the hands of far-sighted dealers.

The point is this. We gave you the facts then and we give them to you now.

The eight marvelous old pre-prohibition whiskeys pictured and named in this advertisement are just

about gone too. In fact we very much doubt if they'll last till Christmas. And in some parts of the country dealers will unquestionably be completely sold out long before then. So, again, we sincerely urge you to act quickly if you want to lay by a case or so for special occasions.

Long before prohibition, these famous whiskeys were regarded by connoisseurs as the very choicest in the land—aristocrats, every one of them. Today, mellowed and sweetened 16 to 18 years in charred oak, they are collectors' items of the tastiest and ripest order.

There'll come times when you want and require something of this exclusive sort—why not anticipate those occasions before it's too late and buy today against the future?

THIS EMBLEM



PROTECTS YOU

AMERICAN MEDICINAL SPIRITS CO. • NEW YORK • CHICAGO • LOUISVILLE • SAN FRANCISCO

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THE FORUM AND • CENTURY

NOVEMBER, 1934



VOL. 92, NO. 5

NOAH'S ARK

Editorial Foreword

DURING THESE past five years of business confusion, when the world's greatest economists have been engaged in controversy, there is one kind of business which has quietly gone its own way and prospered in many countries, including our own. A Finn — a native of the only nation which pays its war debts in full to the United States — Mr. Vaano Tanner, likens the success of consumers' co-operative societies in safely riding the economic flood to Noah's ark floating high on the waves of a world deluge. Like Noah's ark, claims Mr. Tanner, the co-operative movement carries within it the embryo of a new world.

In America we have read for a long time with wonder of the achievements of co-operatives in England, Denmark, and other countries, but the idea has never taken hold of the American imagination, nationally speaking. Our indifference is due to several causes, of which I shall mention only two.

In the United States, several attempts to carry on co-operative societies have failed because the scheme was too grandiose or half-baked or lacked trained personnel in both management and membership. The co-operative set-up is not a game for children or for untrained adult idealists. It requires brains superior, if anything, to those which run so-called capitalistic corporations.

A second reason why co-operatives are not generally popular in America is that many old-fashioned people wrongly imagine them to be radical, socialistic, or "labor." Now, the co-operative principle is neither red nor white, but naked common sense. Capitalist and workingman alike are glad to take shelter in this economic ark, because both are consumers; both want food, clothing, and shelter at reasonable prices. Unlike socialism, the co-operative principle in its pure form everywhere spurns aid from the state. It is a pooling of private initiative and welcomes to its happy fraternity individuals as rugged as the gold diggers of '49. At Harvard University, for example, a generation of sons of American capitalists have enjoyed, along with poor boys paying their own way, the privilege of making their purchases through membership in the Harvard Co-operative Society. They have done so with confidence in the fair play of the management and with satisfaction over the profits distributed out of the saving in advertising, big salaries, and overhead.

II

IN AMERICA, though not yet front-page news, the co-operatives are to-day by no means an infant industry. The audits of Consumers' Co-operative Wholesale Associations, in the

United States, for the first six months of 1934, compared with 1933, make these organizations look indeed like economic lifeboats. Nine of them combined show a volume of \$15,000,000 for the six months, as compared with \$10,000,000 for the same period of last year. *Their combined savings doubled.* These nine wholesale societies are: Union Oil Company (Co-operative), North Kansas City, Mo.; Farmers Union State Exchange, Omaha, Neb.; Midland Co-operative Wholesale, Minneapolis, Minn.; Farmers Union Central Exchange, St. Paul, Minn.; Franklin Co-operative Creamery Association, Minneapolis, Minn.; Central Co-operative Wholesale, Superior, Wis.; Illinois Farm Supply Company, Chicago, Ill.; Indiana Farm Bureau Co-operative Association, Indianapolis, Ind.; Eastern States Farmers Exchange, Springfield, Mass.

A recent issue of "The Consumers' Guide" of the AAA recognizes the growth of our native co-operatives: "Close to two million people in this country have caught this infectious idea and are putting it to work for themselves. They are organized in 3,500 co-operatives. They are doing a business estimated at \$365,000,000 — that's a million dollars a day."

The challenge to consumers to organize co-operatives is greater in America now than ever before. The government announces that commodity prices shall be driven up. The consumer must therefore protect himself against a corresponding rise in retail prices. The increased cost of living must not exceed the rise in wages. In August, American living costs were 3.5 per cent above the level of a year ago, and steadily advancing. The consumers' fight for fair retail prices need not handicap the government in its efforts to raise commodity prices. In Sweden the co-operatives by lowering retail prices have raised basic commodity prices; lessening sales resistance creates greater essential use and demand.

III

WHAT CAN the citizen as consumer do to stem the rising tide of prices? He can boycott stores that ask prices higher than the fair prices published every other week in "The Consumers' Guide." Again, any reader of THE FORUM can with the aid of his friends form a local co-operative society. It may be only for the sale of

knitting yarns or for butter or it may be a more ambitious general store, to teach hard-boiled chain stores the gospel of individual initiative and friendliness. The Co-operative League of the United States is ready to help you. Write for literature to its office at 167 West 12th Street, New York City.

The New Deal looks with favor on co-operative societies. If you want a handbook on how to start a consumers' co-operative and to run it in the black, write to the Department of Labor for Bulletin No. 598. This pamphlet will give you the chief pointers and a list of books on co-operation.

The New Deal may have been behindhand in its help to consumers, but already several government agencies are working night and day in our behalf. Dr. Frederick C. Howe broadcasts for the Consumers' Council every Friday at 3:45 P.M., E.S.T. Every other week the Council publishes "The Consumers' Guide," a magazine which keeps the consuming public informed about fair prices, co-operatives, and other ways of cutting the cost of living.

Some day America will become consumer-conscious. There is certainly need of developing discrimination and purchasing intelligence in a nation which consumes less than fifty per cent of its adequate ration of milk, in a nation still wretchedly housed, in a nation whose producers offer us a choice of 300 brands of canned pineapples, of 1,000 brands of canned salmon, of 4,500 brands of canned corn, to say nothing of a baffling array of chewing gums and an annual invitation to the women of America to select from 100,000,000 dozen pairs of hose of dubious durability.

Where does the producer figure in this consumer picture? In England and other countries the consumer co-operatives are beginning to set up their own factories. In America, for the present, let the producer continue to produce. Let the consumer co-operatives be a regulatory factor by selecting those producers' goods that are sold at fair prices. Let them examine quality for the benefit of the consumer and help the member consumer in choosing that particular brand of canned salmon, that particular pair of silk stockings which both in price and quality come nearest to filling his need.

Henry Goddard Leach

THE LESSON OF THE MORRO CASTLE

BY WILLIAM MCFEE

HOWEVER WIDELY recent sea disasters may have varied in detail, the attitude of the public has remained stable, and can be predicted with reasonable accuracy. There is a first period of emotional hysteria, organized and intensified by expert newspaper and camera men. This is followed by a wave of ignorant indignation, during which various political personages, seizing the chance to make the front page, go off at half cock, blame the foreigner line or the native reds, and introduce legislation that would have the effect of keeping practically every vessel off the sea. The third period begins when another news story pushes the disaster from the front page, and it ends in complete forgetfulness — until another ship goes down or burns up.

It might be assumed from this that the public is damned not so much by those who exploit it as by a fatal inability to maintain interest in its own safety. It will be shown in this article that the solution, if there be a solution, of the problem of safety at sea, must be reached by way of psychology. The actual provision for safety is one problem. To make a ship seem safe to the average American is another entirely different problem.

The destruction of the Ward liner *Morro Castle* has dramatized for us, as nothing else could do, the fire hazards on a modern ship. Here was a fine, fast turbo-electric vessel, less than four years old, costing over five million dollars, and equipped with all the latest contrivances for comfort, safety, and speed. She was within a few miles of the Jersey shore and only twenty miles from Scotland Lightship when she burst into flames in her superstructure, became unmanageable, and had to be abandoned so precipitously that several of her boats still remained on the chocks below the davits when she was beached. Passengers were burned to death in their cabins. Others, urged

to jump into the sea, were either drowned or cut to pieces by the still turning propellers. Apparently the ship burned so fast that the fire hoses were destroyed and the water mains serving them broken below decks by the heat. The communication between engine room and bridge, which corresponds to the nervous system connecting the brain and the limbs of the human body, was put out of action at an early period, and the electric current failed for all purposes a few minutes after the general alarm was sounded.

Nobody who has served at sea can read the evidence at the inquiry without a feeling of profound humiliation. With but few exceptions the officers of the *Morro Castle* went to pieces. The acting captain either gave no orders that could be executed or left his subordinates to their own devices. The orders recorded on the engine-bell sheet by the engineer cadet reveal that no clear conception of what to do was held by anybody on the bridge. Instead of stopping a twenty-knot ship on fire, to reduce the draft that was fanning the flames, the orders were to put full speed on the starboard propeller while stopping the port propeller. This would set the vessel hard over and increase, if anything, the draft to the fire. The chief engineer, describing his own actions in the crisis, was obviously unaware of the extraordinary impression he was making upon his professional brethren in every merchant marine in the world. It became more and more manifest as the inquiry proceeded that neither the acting captain nor the chief engineer had had the faintest conception of leadership in time of danger, and it was therefore impracticable to expect very much from the rest of the personnel.

No life-saving apparatus will ever be of any use in a fire at sea if the personnel fails in fortitude and presence of mind. We have to examine the psychology of seagoing, therefore, in the

light of present-day social conditions. We have to inquire how far the public and the employer can expect the seaman to forget self-interest and adopt at a moment's notice what the newspapers grandly call "the code of the sea." This code seems to boil down to this — that a seaman's life is less valuable to him and his family than a passenger's. It seems at times to signify also, to editorial writers in moods of anger, that a passenger is a more valuable asset to the Republic than a seaman.

We have to make quite sure, in short, that the shipowner who insists in Washington on the super-sanctity of the profit motive in business has the right to demand a sanctity of another sort in his seaman. Fortitude and presence of mind are desirable in business men as well as in ships' officers, and the instant attribution of incendiarism and sabotage to "reds" and "radicals" and "communists," by the owners of a ship, indicates a failure on their part to understand the nature of responsibility. It would be entirely logical for a seaman to insist that shipowners and stockholders give up their dividends to ensure their passengers' safety, if it be an obligation on the part of the seaman to give up his life in the service of the same lofty ideal.

It is absolutely necessary to keep before us the conditioning of the public mind to an unquestioning acceptance of the profit motive as the paramount principle of our lives. On my desk as I write lie three advertisements from the New York newspapers of January, 1929. By one of the most amazing coincidences in maritime history, Captain George Fried; his chief officer, Mr. Manning; and the bosun's mate who assisted in carrying out the rescue of the crew of the Italian ship *Florida* to the steamship *America* were found to smoke the same kind of cigarette. In fact the last-named seaman was so sensitive to the demands of the profit motive in industry and the sacred obligations of modern business that he rowed with one hand and held one of the advertised cigarettes in the other.

And before the fire ceased to smolder in the hull of the beached *Morro Castle* at Asbury Park, her chief radio operator had accepted a vaudeville contract as a hero to tour the country and tell his audiences the story of his own heroism in the tragedy.

What the public, including all potential passengers, really demands of a modern seaman is that he preserve for their benefit a principle of medieval ethics while they themselves continue — through his sacrifices — to live and prosper in the twentieth-century manner. What the shipowner demands, in a moment of crisis, is that his employees display the courage of ancient knights while he himself hides behind a squad of high-priced lawyers. The very fact that we instantly demand new laws compelling shipowners to do this or that to ensure safety reveals the dubious nature of our argument. It is quite possible to propose laws so drastic that ocean travel would become perfectly safe — because it had ceased to exist. But, so long as the great body of citizens instinctively condones anything that helps to make money and condemns reckless care for lives rather than for capital, the struggle will continue between the shipowner and the government inspector, with the inspector interpreting his rules in an increasingly lenient spirit.

II

IT IS SOMETIMES suggested as one of the formidable difficulties of the American shipowner that he has to pay much higher wages than his European competitors and that this places him at a disadvantage. He has developed a custom, it is stated, of paying off his crews when the ship reaches her home port and signing on a new crew on sailing day.

There is no doubt that such a practice has been in force all over the world for years. The argument, however, is specious, for it affects in no way the safety of life at sea. The quick turnaround of modern ships, whereby two ships now handle the schedule formerly requiring three, thus saving the shipowner a substantial sum in annual maintenance, is a much more serious hazard for the passenger, for it inevitably involves under present conditions the overworking of the ships' officers. It was frequently possible twenty years ago for the chief officer of an Atlantic flyer to be on his feet for twenty-four hours in port and then have to stand his watch on the bridge as soon as he had snuggled down on the forecastle head. Nowadays it is supposed to be compulsory for an officer to get four hours' rest before standing a sea watch. I say "supposed to be compulsory." But the case

now pending in the courts against an American line shows that in many cases the ships are underofficered and the officers overworked.

It might make the problem a little easier for the landsman to understand, if the modern passenger ship is viewed for what she really is, a hotel built over a floating base. It is in my opinion, for example, unreasonable and it should be legally indefensible to regard bedroom stewards, cooks, bakers, bartenders, and waiters as members of a ship's crew. They should be classed with and after the passengers, and be subject to the same rules as passengers, when the lifeboats are in use. Neither the training nor the usual temperament of such people makes it feasible to call them seamen or sea women or to impose the responsibility of a boat's crew upon them. It would be as sensible as to expect the scullions in a hotel kitchen to be expert fire fighters. Nobody on board who takes tips should be classed as a seaman.

It is one of the plagues and hardships of the ship's officer's life that the business of boat and fire drill disrupts the peace and routine of the ship. The law requires that it be done once a week, and, so far as weather and circumstances permit, it is done on every ship at sea. But circumstances are at times extremely stubborn. The weather may make it impossible, and, when a ship is in port, she is at a dock on one side, and lighters are tied up on her outer side. It is impossible in such cases to lower boats or carry out adequate fire practice. Engine-room machinery has to be overhauled in port, and boilers have to be cleaned and tested. The dock water may be full of ice. The ship may be taking on oil fuel. In a southern port the stay may be a matter of only a few hours. Unless an entire extra staff is carried for the sole purpose of fire and boat drill, it may be impossible to perform them according to law.

The passengers may retort that the ship should be anchored clear of the dock before sailing, to carry out these drills. Unhappily the passenger is the fly in the amber. The passenger is responsible for all the hurry. The passenger insists on getting to his destination at a faster and faster rate of speed and in a luxury and splendor beyond anything the degenerate Roman emperors ever conceived. The passenger is the first to utter loud cries at the slightest delay. He must be housed and fed as

he never dreams of housing and feeding himself ashore and he must have the speed of an express train. He must have penthouses and solariums, swimming pools and night clubs, orchestras, gardens, and gymnasia. He must have elevators to save him exercise and deck games and horseback riding on an electric horse to give him exercise. He must be fed almost hourly, and the brains of the management reel in the struggle to keep him amused and placated. He must be allowed no moment of that hell of solitude which every American seems to dread worse than death. He must have toys given him when he eats, to distract him like a child. The trash, most of it inflammable, which is carried for one "captain's dinner" would fill a box car.

The indignation which inspires a demand that everything on a ship be rendered fireproof arises from a widespread delusion that it is possible to suspend the laws of nature where Americans are concerned. Their desire for luxury transcending anything in their homes precludes a return to the austere accommodations of early days. But it may be mentioned that all materials are made as non-inflammable as possible, before being built into a ship, and it is quite impossible to conceive of the *Morro Castle* burning up like a torch in an hour or so merely by accident.

III

SINCE VERY EARLY days the question of lifeboats has engaged the attention of inventors, legislators, and owners. It must be borne in mind by the landsman that no lifeboat even approaches the theoretical ideal of safety. It should be non-inflammable, in which case it should be made of metal and therefore would be subject to corrosion. It should be instantly detachable, and it will be in consequence extremely vulnerable. It must be accessible, and it is therefore necessarily carried above the superstructure, which in a modern, large ship is about fifty feet above the water line. It must be buoyant and non-capsizable, which means it must be of large capacity and thus heavy to handle. It may have a motor, when it will be doubly difficult to raise and lower. It must be equipped with sails and oars and also stores and water for a long voyage. It must have a compass for navigating and flares to attract atten-

tion. It must be a ship in miniature and it must also have some protection from exposure.

Such a boat does not exist save in the minds of non-technical landmen. The electrical gear, which is used to raise and lower and move lifeboats on a ship, may go out of commission if the engine room is abandoned, and a motor lifeboat on the davits of a burning ship is a terrible fire hazard if she uses gasoline. If the fuel is a heavy oil she may take too long to start. The best contrivance for lifeboats is neither a motor nor an oared boat but the Fleming lifeboat, in which a propeller is driven by gears actuated by folding side levers which in turn are operated by the passengers and crew, sitting on the thwarts. The Fleming lifeboat is accepted by the British Board of Trade in lieu of a motor boat, for freight steamers. Its handiness in getting away from a ship's side is far beyond that of an oared boat. Oars cannot be used until the boat is an oar's length from the ship. The Fleming boat can go off at a flying start as soon as the occupants are in place. The gear takes up no room and is safe from damage because it is concealed under the woodwork of the boat's sides. Few sailors can handle a heavy oar, but almost anyone can work a lever like a pump handle.

When the United States Senate graciously deigns to ratify the conclusions of the London Conference for Safety at Sea it will be possible to offer more constructive criticism for American ships. But nothing will take the place of first-rate men of the type of Fried and Stedman, in command. Nothing will be of any avail unless the continual smolder of discontent, among the officers and men, with conditions of work at sea, is quenched by concessions that will send them out keen on their work. If a shipowner cannot make money without sweating the men who have the lives of passengers and millions of dollars of ship and cargo in their care, he had better go out of business. Unfortunately, during the boom that followed the war a large number of men who had no tradition of shipowning behind them entered the shipping business, and they have bedeviled shipowning ever since. It would be a good policy if commanders and officers of ships carrying passengers were forbidden to hold stock in the lines they serve.

It is a delicate theme to approach, but the

memory of what happened after the explosion of a Fall River pleasure steamer some years ago forces one to the conclusion that the two functions of inspection and inquiry should be completely divorced. The boilers of that pleasure steamer had been inspected in New York, only a short time before the disaster, and passed. The same department that was responsible for the inspection conducted the inquiry into the explosion that killed many of the passengers and crew. The same anomaly was observable in the *Vestris* case, for that vessel carried a certificate of seaworthiness issued by the department which investigated her loss and which attributed that loss to a man who went down with her. When the *Morro Castle* burned, the inquiry was conducted by the very men who were responsible for the inspection of the efficiency of her equipment and personnel. It is hardly necessary to point out that in other human activities it is found desirable to dissociate the functions of judge and defendant. By the present arrangement no delinquency on the part of the Inspection Department can ever be brought to light as an actual fact.

IV

IT IS A cardinal feature of most provisions for safety to render them invisible to the patrons. The quality of the steel in an automobile frame, the problems of stability in a railroad train, and the precautions for making buildings safe for large crowds are mostly concealed. But on a ship, by reason of the conditions of sea travel, the very fire and boat drills which are to achieve safety have a sinister effect upon the minds of those who witness them. The sudden blare of the whistle or shriek of the siren; the ringing of the bells; the stamp of many feet running hither and yon to reach stations; the donning of life belts; and the awesome paying out of fire hose — all these things induce the wrong feeling among the passengers. The more realistic and efficient the drills are, the more emphatic their effect. Even the pointing out — by a careful stewardess — of the notice in a passenger's cabin of the position of the lifeboat assigned to that passenger, or an offer to show how to put on a life belt, will be regarded with nervous dislike by travelers from inland sections. I have actually heard of a passenger, asked to move when boat drill was

THE LESSON OF THE MORRO CASTLE

in progress, exclaiming, "We aren't going to sink, are we?" Shipowners and officers would be glad indeed if all the paraphernalia of drills could be carried out in secret.

It used to be a joke that the ignorant emigrant from Central Europe always preferred a ship with several funnels, believing that she was safer than a one-funnel ship. The American passenger reacts in very much the same way. He is reassured by a multitude of boats, but he has little interest in learning that a man entering a boat should know what to do. He wants the safety of a non-sinkable Eskimo kayak and the luxury of a New York hotel. It might be a good thing to abolish elevators in ships, for the shafts constitute an extraordinary hazard on account of the impossibility of cutting off one deck from another. The draft through them is unmanageable, for it must be remembered that in heavy weather it is impossible to live far down in a ship unless the fans are carrying fresh air to the lower decks. Elevator shafts carry water away and supply oxygen for the flames.

These are counsels of perfection. The modern sea voyager has been corrupted in two ways in his attitude to the sea. He has been conditioned to expect a palace afloat. The whole tendency of modern sea catering is to make the passengers forget they are at sea, to make them wallow in

an endless round of senseless amusement. They must never have a moment to think of possible peril. Time enough when the ship is going down to have the orchestra play "Nearer, My God, to Thee."

The other way in which they have become corrupted is in their attitude toward the men who run the ships. A false romanticism with regard to the sea still maintains its hold on the imagination of Americans. One of the passengers of the *Morro Castle*, in his simplicity, let this particular cat out of the bag at the inquiry. He naïvely confessed that from the fiction he had read he expected to see the officers — with guns in their hands — standing nobly on the burning decks and cowing everybody with their heroism. He did not say so, but it was apparent that he also expected them to go down with the ship.

Against this romantic illusion which hides the sea affair from the average American passenger it seems helpless to struggle. But the passenger must make his choice. He cannot have the huge, fast luxury liner at his service, with everything sacrificed to voluptuous speed, and yet retain within call the austere moral grandeur of a former age. Seamen belong to their own times. They reflect pretty accurately the ethics and the *mores* of their patrons.



WIDOWS' WEEDS

BY ANTOINETTE GILMAN

EVERY WOMAN should be compelled to play the rôle of widow for a year or two during her lifetime. If this could be arranged without reckless slaughter of the male population, it would broaden the outlook of the feminine world to such an extent that women would cease to be the negligible quantity in progress which they seem to have been to date.

That statistics do not show that the few advances which are conceded to the female sex have all been made by widows but proves my point. The lack of understanding accorded their particular problems has kept them so busy fighting their way and has kept other women so busy being shocked and intolerant that few steps ahead were possible.

Divorce is doing its best to enlarge the number of broadened and enlightened females, and to that extent it is a blessing. No divorced woman can ever go back to quite the smug and narrow-minded state she previously occupied, unless she proceeds promptly from the courtroom to the justice of the peace, in which case she is probably smuggler and is neither in any way eligible for the distinction of having been a widow nor entitled to the benefits to be derived from that solitary state.

Until she has practiced being a widow for a while, no woman can appreciate what it did for her to have the comforting knowledge that she had a mate. Whatever his faults, there was someone who thought of her before all others, who cared especially for her as an established part of his life. Long after the fires of romance burned low, her marriage held for her this gentle security of habitual thought.

Losing this security rips the veil from her illusions and gives the widow that knowing look which is at once the envy and the terror of all happily married women. Having loved and lost — by either the “grass” or “sod” method of widowing — instead of making a

woman the object of all society's tender solicitude (“widows and orphans”), now pits her against the world, a lone wolf on a hilltop, surrounded by enemies in all manner of disguises. That knowing look is acquired by learning to penetrate the disguises.

Among other astonishing developments, a widow suddenly discovers that, unless she be a very young and gay recruit in the ranks, the social world will pass her by except when she deliberately steps out and flags it. After the novelty of cheering up the new widow wears off, she finds she has few engagements which she does not arrange for herself. The casual interchange of social courtesies so taken for granted among married couples abruptly ceases. Men don't like to take their wives to call at houses where there isn't a male host. If you do not believe this just try to get your husband to take you to call on some widow friend to-night and see how many excuses he can think of.

Of course the widow's family will remember her periodically. Her sisters will get conscience-stricken and say, “Poor Jane! We really must have her over to dinner.” And their husbands will grumble, “Well can't you do it some time when I am out of town?” And that will not mean that Jane is old or ugly or brainless or has a mean disposition. Just that a man likes another man for moral support when he is forced into the society of more than one female at a time. Unless he has some business or cultural interest in common with them he won't enjoy spending an evening with “a bunch of women” — as he will probably designate his wife and her sister.

THE STALKING MALE

IT is undeniable that in the civilized world the social game is played by twosomes and foursomes. A widow who has been included

in a clique which exchanges dinners and plays bridge is destined to be ostracized the minute she is without a husband. When she is ready to start going out, after a suitable period of seclusion, she will find that her place has been taken by a congenial couple. Even a fairly steady admirer will not qualify her. When the rest of the crowd is married, the atmosphere is strained by the inclusion of a single pair not among the anointed. She will find that the sort of society she has been used to will have no place for her.

Personally I never could see why there had to be exactly the same number of pants and skirts under the table in order to enjoy a good dinner, but that seems to be the law. When I entertain guests I do so because I want to see them or because there is some dish we enjoy eating together, and I do not consider the equal division of the sexes of any importance. This, I suppose, only brands me as hopelessly bourgeois and does not relieve the widow's partnerless plight.

Oh, she need not be lonesome. At least not before she is seventy. She will have plenty of chances for love affairs almost at once, especially clandestine ones. Plenty of the husbands of her friends, plenty of men whose wives are away on vacations or who are in town without their wives will be able to think up excuses for coming to call on her alone or for taking her out, within limits — if she will make herself agreeable and they are sure she won't tell. But woe is hers if she yields to any of their blandishments and any of her old married women friends happen to hear of it. I have known more than one lifelong friendship to crack up over the rumor that a widow was seeing a married man.

And if she sternly turns her back on the married men, there are still likely to be a few old bachelors and widowers who will hang around, tentatively testing her to see whether she will expect them to marry her. There seems to be something very smart and daring about paying court to a widow. It has all the challenge of seeing how close you can come to the fire without being burned. Brothers and fathers don't worry so much about the "intentions" of men paying court to a widow. She is supposed to be able to take care of herself. But I have known widows to drop the

"Mrs." from their names, even at the expense of being considered old maids, because they found it so hard to maintain a dignified status in their relationships with men if it were known that they had been married. Oh, a widow need not be lonesome, if she cares for that sort of thing.

Not only is she considered legitimate prey for the stalking male as long as she retains any semblance of youthful attraction, but her married sisters-under-the-skin are none too cordial if they imagine her interests in any way conflict with theirs. A lone girl can always count on a boost from her married women friends, but a widow! Alas, she is automatically an object of suspicion and distrust. Let her but pause to pass the time of day with an acquaintance of the other sex, and forthwith she is accused of plotting to steal somebody's husband or confiscate some young thing's fiancé.

It is not her dear, dead husband's business associates but their wives who make it hard for her to protect her interests in the business world. With one accord they stab her in the back — attack her motives, belittle her ability, and make it impossible for their husbands to do the fair thing (assuming they are so inclined), by insinuating that they are overanxious to favor her. A widow who carries on her husband's business after his death certainly does so at the expense of what respect she may have had for married women, no matter how upright and honorable her conduct may be toward the world of husbands. Oh, if only they all had to be widows — just for a couple of years!

Becoming a widow jars a woman out of the comfortable rut into which marriage was gradually settling her and casts her upon the trackless prairie, with no road to limit or direct her adventuring feet. No wonder if it turns her head a bit at first. All the glory which had been shining upon the head of the house is turned upon her. She suddenly realizes that she can invest and spend her money to suit herself — staggering masculine prerogative — (that is, of course, if there is any money). She can cook what she likes for supper and go where she wants for her vacation. She is free of all the troublesome concessions she has had to make to her husband's tastes and peculiarities. She will never again have to explain, "John

never likes me to wear anything but blue" — when she loathes blue — or, "Musical comedies are the only shows John cares for, so that is the only theater we ever attend" — when she is pining with all her soul to see the heaviest problem play of the season.

But with this freedom comes also the blood-congealing fear that she could die and the worms could eat her before her best friend would miss her. So much does she miss having to account to some one for her every coming and going.

STALKING THE MALE

WHETHER or not the desire to remarry is present in the thoughts of a widow it is common practice for the rest of the world to put it there. It is customary not to take her seriously if she denies it. We are prone to regard her as more or less stealthily upon the hunt for another husband. We would not insult her intelligence by believing that she would turn down a good proposal of marriage, for in spite of all that it is popular to say against the married state it still remains, by and large, the best-paid profession for women. In fact a lot of quiet and unobtrusive research on the subject has convinced me that there is only one reason which the public will accept for a woman remaining a widow after a reasonable period of mourning, and that is that no man of even passably suitable qualifications has sufficiently urged her to abandon the status.

But a second marriage has very little in common with the first. Whether or not she is actuated by a "great love," there is something alluring about becoming a member of the ancient and honorable order of wives which makes every woman who has never been admitted feel that she has missed something, perhaps the greatest thing in life, if she does not marry. But, when she has once been through the rigors of the initiation, the mystery is departed, the glamor is rubbed off. The second marriage, to all but the incurable romanticist, is made in a very different state of mind.

The matter of age is nowhere so important as in the question of marriage. That the difference between the sublime and the ridiculous may be only a matter of years is demonstrated every day in the papers. There is nothing more soul-satisfying than a couple

suitably in love. By the same token there is nothing more distressing than a "love" which is not suitable. Nothing!

To a woman of mature intelligence who is not afflicted with the pangs herself, the company of a lovesick male is the pinnacle of boredom. I say "mature" because she has no such aversion to the society of the smitten male when she is properly going through the performance in her early teens and twenties. In fact she enjoys it very much. All that is the natural prelude to getting married the first time. But, in a second marriage, choosing between a lovesick man who is old enough to know better, a callow youth dazzled by her worldly charm, a lonely man seeking companionship, or a widower looking for a housekeeper is difficult for her indeed. Be good to your husbands, oh you fat and forty matrons! Take a good look at an Elks' parade or a Shriners' convention the next time you are tempted to make caustic comments about your widow friends not marrying again. Consider what you would have to choose from if you were forced to select another mate.

Granted that marriage is a highly desirable state for woman, at least during her twenties and thirties. Granted that she needs the intensive discipline in self-sacrifice, the broadening influence of being compelled to see things from a man's point of view, the richness of mating which, as our society is organized to-day, only marriage can give. A woman deprived of a husband during those years is entitled to all the sympathy and understanding we can give her and much that we can't unless we have suffered the experience ourselves. But after she has passed the famous forty mark it is not so easy to whip her every natural inclination into line with the lofty ambition to make her marriage a success. If she is lucky enough to have established a record once it must be a powerful urge that can make her willing to go into training again and make the effort to come back under all the handicaps of advancing years. I heard one spirited widow say that after a little taste of the freedom of widowhood she was so skeptical of her ability to make herself into a good wife again that she would hesitate to marry her worst enemy!

What is so alluring, anyway, about living in a state where some man, no matter how de-

lightful and fascinating he may be, has first mortgage on one's every moment, the right to share one's most sacred privacy, the unchallenged privilege of criticizing one's every thought? What makes it so alluring that widows who have once escaped from it are in such a hurry to return to it? Do they forget so soon the pride-scorching experience of having to ask a man for money? Do they pine for the heartbreak that comes with the doubt of a husband's fidelity? Are the advantages to be gained along with a dinner partner so precious that they overbalance all the necessary sacrifices? Alas, I fear that most widows who marry again do so largely to prove to themselves and the world that someone wants them. And that their married friends egg them on, even into undesirable unions, because there seems to be nothing else to do with them.

WIDOWS SHOULD NOT GET EXCITED

STATISTICS on the relative lasting qualities of the second marriage as compared to the first would be interesting. If we can lay claim to being an intelligent race, they should reveal fewer divorces, indicating that we learn something from the first experience which better fits us for the second, but I doubt very much if this is the case. Discovering that "till death do us part" is not as final as it sounds seems to have a devastating effect on our endurance of unpleasant situations. Likewise the widow who has buried her husband seems less tolerant of his successor. The first marriage may be made in heaven, but the second is a distinctly earthly adventure and must provide material advantages which most of us do not demand of the first. Otherwise, why make it? Or why stick with it if it doesn't turn out according to advance notices?

We used to think that widows must marry again if possible, in order to give their children social advantages, but with the advent of co-education and the social life offered by many business activities our offspring have learned to pick their own companions. I find the children of my various friends rarely chumming together, in fact sometimes totally unacquainted. Nowadays Daughter brings home her man to meet the folks, instead of waiting for Dad to bring one home or for a friend of mother's to introduce one to her at a ball.

One of the chief factors in the second marriage is the gaunt specter of a lonely old age. Everyone seems to fear the possibility of being in a position where he will have to be alone. The chance that marriage may condemn one for the rest of his life to the daily and hourly association with an utterly uncongenial companion seems never so alarming as that he may have to spend that time alone.

I have always thought that it should be possible for an intelligent and educated woman to develop resources within herself sufficient to subdue the fear of loneliness and to provide entertainment for the hours she would, if married, give to a husband. If she must have companionship, why must a second husband be the answer? Why not select companions from other lonely people she knows? Of course it is true that friends would probably walk out on her if she treated them with the lack of good manners usually reserved for display before husbands only. I have sometimes wondered if that were not a husband's chief mission — to provide companionship under conditions which no one else would tolerate. However, we are rapidly coming to the time when the woman who regards her husband in that light will find herself without one. That is one thing which the loosening of the marriage bond will certainly do — it will improve our married manners.

But to return to the boggy of the lonely old age which is constantly being dangled before the eyes of a widow by her loving friends. They talk about the time when her children will be married and will no longer need her, when she will be left entirely alone. How terrible to face life with no loving mate to care whether she slept well last night or whether her rheumatism is worse to-day. ("Maybe we won't have rheumatism any more by that time," she parries.) No one to tell her if her petticoat is showing. ("Maybe we won't wear petticoats," she says hopefully.) Well, anyway, nobody to notice whether her hair is curled — we'll certainly always curl hair! Of course there doubtless are nice old gentlemen who would totter about squinting through their eyeglasses to take cognizance of these details so important to a lady's happiness, and she might be lucky enough to get one if she chose a second husband, but my observation of old couples has usually revealed that it is *she* who inquires

about *his* rheumatism, sees that he takes his pill, notes that his beard is properly combed.

But maybe our widow will fool us — maybe she won't live to be old. Not everyone does. And surely it is imbecile to live all one's life with the thought of old age the determining factor in one's plans. As imbecile as saving money for one's funeral.

I have observed that the people who do something interesting do not lack for companionship. They draw to them the people who are interested in the same line of endeavor, and a little success collects also the people who always flock to investigate success. And how much more stable a basis of association among older people is a common interest in a project than the fickle flare of sex interest fanned to life by the possibility of another marriage!

Widowhood is a profession as distinct and far removed from wifehood as two lives could possibly be. To be successful in it a widow must cease to compare herself with the wives she knows or the wife she used to be, cease envying others the blessings and advantages which are no longer hers and which it is doubtful she could regain by a second marriage. Above all she must invoke her sense of humor when she

hears what her married friends are saying about her. She must make herself a new life, using her precious freedom to accomplish the things that were impossible for her as a wife. She must carve out a career in this busy world, if it be no more than a career as housekeeper in someone else's home. If her marriage was a success she has had her dream and she shouldn't tempt fate by trying to duplicate it. If not, she is better off free. Marriage is not the only happiness. She must turn her face to the future and try to discover what else life has to offer.

Advancing years in this civilized world need have no more terrors for the lone woman than for the old couple. I have often thought it would be possible to have a wonderful time in an old ladies' home! As we grow older it is not passion and adventure and conquest that we crave, if we are normal, but rather intellectual satisfaction, amusement, contentment. And all these things must come largely from within ourselves.

Married or unmarried, we must make the adjustment to advancing years. And for many a widow it is simpler to do this alone than with an unknown quantity trying to make his adjustment in the same bedroom!

Harried House

Born with a private fury in my breast
All winds assail me when I walk abroad,
Fanning the fires of hurry and unrest
As ceaseless incense to my heathen god.
His breath begets a daily hurricane
To sweep my path; pushed by his frantic hand
Boats snap their moorings and the staidest train
Skips on its rails; unpunctual and unplanned,
Clocks strike the hour too soon; mad whistles blow
The dawn; dogs bark and slamming doors awake
My harried house. . . . No quiet of the snow
Or patient rain. . . . Only the tempests shake
My frightened towers: as lightning gathers I
Await with guilty heart the falling sky!

ELIZABETH MORROW

TAXES SAVE THE BOOTLEGGER

BY EDWARD ANGLY

ASIDE FROM the moral and spiritual benefits which repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment was expected to bring — by restoring a stolen liberty and abolishing a universal hypocrisy — the return of legal liquor was hopefully counted on to produce three immediate, practical results of a wholesome nature. It was to rid the land of the bootlegger, give the American people good liquor instead of bad liquor to drink, and tap a revenue rock from which several hundred million dollars would flow each year into the thirsty Treasury. None of these expected ends has been achieved by repeal, nor is any of the three likely to be brought about in the near future.

Nearly a year after the restoration of legal alcoholic beverages, the bootlegger is supplying the country with more than half its hard liquor. An unconscionable proportion of the domestic whisky released to the retail trade by licensed distillers and wholesalers is either so green or so stingily blended with neutral spirits as to be unpalatable, not only to experienced gullets but even to those that have never enjoyed anything superior to what the bootlegger brought. The Treasury is receiving from drink less than half the revenue it counted upon getting when Congress enacted the Liquor Tax Act in the dreamy days of last January.

Upon that tax measure and similarly greedy attempts by legislatures in many wet states to squeeze golden eggs of unprecedented proportions out of the new-born goose rests most of the explanation for the bootlegger's continued activity and prosperity. It is almost entirely because the taxes are so high that the Treasury has been disappointed in its receipts. One may attribute also, in part, to the severity of the tariff the fact that there is available so little palatable rye and bourbon. These two distinctively American whiskies, scorned almost

everywhere outside the United States and Canada, always were, now are, and probably ever will be the most popular distilled drinks in this country. When Prohibition expired there wasn't enough matured rye or bourbon in the country to provide even a jigger for each citizen. The high tariff, since then, has kept out most of the aged ryes and bourbons in storage across the northern frontier. That is why so much raw, new liquor has been put on the market and why the old bonded stocks have been so sparingly used as the basis for blending. As for gin, the next most popular distillate with Americans, numerous householders, disappointed in the quality of the stuff offered in retail shops or feeling outraged by the price charged for it, have gone back to making it at home or buying from bootleggers.

Anyone with good eyes and ears who was an adult before the Eighteenth Amendment smeared the Constitution knows that more liquor is being consumed in the United States nowadays than before Prohibition. During its reign the population increased by seventeen millions, fiery spirits became commonplaces in the homes of countless men who previously had confined their drinking to clubs and saloons, and the temptation of forbidden fruit had fourteen years in which to captivate the women, few of whom had been acquainted with either the amenities or the giggling hilarities of drink until alcoholic beverages became illegal. Yet to-day, despite indications of all sorts that drinking has increased, the government is collecting taxes on a consumption averaging less than one third the gallonage which provided revenue in 1916 and through the decade immediately preceding. The remainder of the liquor sipped and guzzled in these days of repeal is supplied, tax-free, by the bootlegger, who, since December last, has been operating under such a protective tariff as

almost any manufacturer might envy.

When Congress enacted the liquor-tax legislation, the experts in such affairs at Washington estimated that nearly half a billion dollars a year would accrue from it. Their estimates are turning out to be as over-optimistic as were the revenue forecasts which emanated from Uncle Andy Mellon in the first two years of the current hard times. Throughout the three decades which led up to the war, there was never a year in which alcoholic beverages failed to provide at least thirty per cent of the Treasury's revenue. But a one-billion-dollar budget was a novelty in 1913, and a seven-billion-dollar deficit was too astronomical for a groundling even to dream about. In order to make liquor bear a third of the tax load to-day, every adult in the country would have to stay drunk most of the time. So, of course, neither the late Congress nor the Treasury expected repeal to provide its old-time proportion of the government's revenue. What the legislators and the Administration did contemplate was that beer, wines, and liquors would bring in at least five hundred million dollars this year. To get that sum Congress jacked up the tax on spirits to almost twice its pre-war figure, more than doubled the load on domestic wines, and tripled the pre-Prohibition punishment on many imported beverages. Thus, it was estimated, domestic liquor would produce three hundred million a year, beer another hundred seventy million, and imports two or three dozen more millions.



II

LET US SEE what has happened. In the first six months of this year the heavy-spirits tax, instead of producing the hundred fifty million contemplated for that period, drew less than forty-eight million from the distilleries. Meanwhile the more lightly loaded beer came through with ninety million, almost exactly the amount expected from it. In the past, spirits brought in the major portion of the beverage revenues. They were expected to do so under repeal. But the federal-tax burden on spirits before prohibition was only \$1.10 a

gallon, and the individual states, not yet having gone hog-wild over better roads and bigger schools, were content with what the liquor trade could supply in indirect taxation through the licensing of manufacturers, distributors, and dispensing agencies from the saloon upward. Since repeal most of the wet states, many of them struggling with unbalanced budgets, have not been satisfied merely to raise the level of their fees upon brewers, distillers, dealers, restaurants, clubs, and hotels. They have pounced upon alcoholic beverages with direct taxation as well — so much on each gallon of beer, wine, or spirits sold within their boundaries. Like the federal government, the individual states have been disappointed by the tax crop from liquor. The inhabitants of New York, whose citizens imbibe a vastly greater number of gallons in a given time than the populace of any other commonwealth among the forty-eight, had been expected by the tax experts to consume this year nearly sixteen million gallons of spirits in addition to disposing of considerable wine and beer. That would be no more *per capita* than the average American, taking him in dry states as well as in wet ones, drank before the war. And on each of these gallons the State of New York expected to collect one dollar of direct taxation. So far the returns indicate that the consumption will barely exceed six million gallons by New Year's Eve, and Mr. Mark Graves, the Tax Commissioner at Albany, laments that at least half the hard liquor being drunk in New York State is sold illegally.

Elsewhere the bootlegger fares even better against his licensed competitors. An observant traveler through the South and the West is likely to conclude quite rapidly that there is proportionately less bootlegging in New York than in the less populous states. This is partly attributable to the liberality of New York's laws, which are nearly as tolerant as those of France. Liquor is easily obtainable at almost any hour if one has the price. In some others of the wet states, even though one can afford to satisfy one's desire for drink, it is frequently more convenient to buy from a bootlegger than from licensed distributors, for, as was recently remarked by the director of the Federal Alcohol Control Administration, Mr. Joseph H. Choate,

Jr., "many of the states have devised laws which would prove practicable in a community of saints."

The crux of the problem, however, is less a matter of the buyer's convenience or even of the quality of the products available from the two rival sources than it is of price. The bootlegger carries on because it is economically feasible for him to do so. For that the bulk of the blame may be placed upon a greedy Congress and a nearsighted government. The old tax of \$1.10 a gallon on spirits stood unchanged from 1894 to 1917 and generally brought in nearly two hundred million dollars a year. With repeal, this levy was lifted to two dollars on straight whisky — of which there can be little pleasure to drink until the new stocks have had at least four years to mature. On blended whisky, which is what most rye and bourbon consumers must be content with, the tax was elevated to \$2.30 a gallon, which generally works out to be almost five hundred per cent *ad valorem*. Imported brandies sometimes must bear nearly ten times their value in tariffs, taxes, and stamp duties.

Having seen such loads put upon the back of his new competitor last winter, the bootlegger decided to remain in business for a while longer. He is still leading his licensed rival in their race for the custom of the thirsty, nor is he likely to drop behind and even less to fall by the wayside, so long as taxes are maintained at their existing altitude and good, matured liquor remains scarce.

Upon assuming office, four days before the Twenty-first Amendment came ringing into effect over the air waves from Utah, Mr. Choate said he was convinced that the people wanted to obey the law. He may still be convinced of that but he is also convinced that millions of Americans are encouraging violation of the law by continuing to purchase their drinks from illicit sources. President Roosevelt, in proclaiming repeal on the evening of December 5, enjoined all citizens to confine their purchases of alcoholic beverages to duly licensed agents and proclaimed that "we must remove forever from our midst the menace of the bootlegger."

A few months later Mr. Choate had reached the conclusion that the government was losing more liquor taxes than it was capturing. The

federal-tax returns might lead a naïve statistician to conclude the contrary. But the government has evidence, said Mr. Choate in midsummer, from which it is reasonable to infer that the American people is consuming a greater amount of spirits than before the war. If so, the bulk of it is not coming from legal dealers. In 1917, when more than half of the states were dry, the United States absorbed one hundred forty-five million gallons of legal spirits, of which ninety million gallons were whiskies, all but a small proportion of these being domestic ryes and bourbons. To-day liquor is legal in twenty-nine states and in the District of Columbia, but the tax returns indicate that consumption of domestic whisky is going along at an average of less than forty million gallons a year. The higher taxes are not bringing in as much revenue as did the lower rates before the war.

Beer consumption seems to be only forty per cent of what it was in 1916. Higher levies have denied the workingman the nickel glass of beer he anticipated, and he hasn't as many dimes as he possessed eighteen years ago. Besides, he uses more of them now than he did then to buy gasoline, which, after all, is the country's leading intoxicant.



III

ONE HAS ONLY to get on a train or take to the road in any direction to learn why the bootlegger lives on. A Virginian who has taken a few salary cuts during the depression enters one of the liquor shops controlled by his state and finds that he must pay three dollars or more a bottle for bourbon distilled last winter. Even a young blend is likely to be higher still, and the better blends nearer four dollars. Before Prohibition this man could have bought a green bourbon for fifty cents a bottle, and two dollars would have fetched a thirty-year-old quart fit for any connoisseur in the South. Having been obliged to plank down between three and five dollars for a quart of repeal's legal whisky, is it not understandable that the next time he yearns for a drink, instead of returning to the state monopoly shop, he

should call up his bootlegger, who is eager to deliver six-months-old "kawn" at the back door for a dollar a quart?

Westward across the mountains, Tennessee moonshine sells within smelling distance of the Kentucky distilleries at seventy-five cents a quart.

In Oregon — one of the eleven states which have a state monopoly on legal distribution of liquor — anyone desiring to purchase spirits or wine must have an individual permit which costs one dollar a year. Oregon's Liquor Commissioner, George L. Gammis, remarked a few weeks ago that bootleggers and speakeasies were selling seventy-five per cent of the liquor consumed in Portland.

Missouri has a law requiring liquor retailers to keep a stock of non-gurgling merchandise of at least fifteen hundred dollars in value. This regulation has turned out to be just one more break for the bottlegger, who isn't obliged to bother with a side-line stock of shirts or sealing wax or other anhydrous items.

In New York, Edward P. Mulrooney, the realistic observer of the human comedy who was formerly the metropolitan police commissioner and is now Chairman of the State Board of Alcoholic Beverage Control, predicts that there will be speakeasies as long as illicit liquor is cheaper than the honest kind.

Out in Iowa, a degree of aid and comfort is afforded the bootlegger by a law installing a

state censor in each liquor shop to pass upon who may buy and who must go away empty-handed — to seek a moonshiner's agent. The Iowa censor is authorized to stop the purchaser's spending when he thinks the buyer has bought all that is good for him.

In Indiana, the bootlegger's only legal competitor is the druggist, for the Hoosier law, in adding beverage liquor to the drug store's ever expanding list of non-pharmaceutical stocks, denied it to merchants lacking licenses to mix medicine.

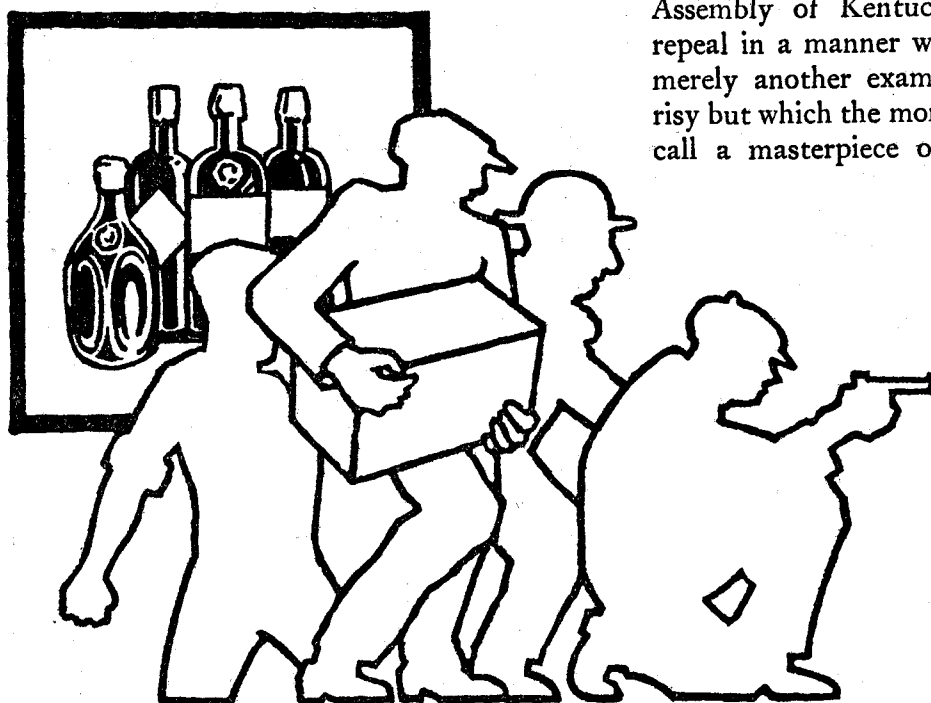
On the Atlantic coast, the resident of Connecticut who desires to drink must buy no less than one quart at a time.

On the Pacific, the Californian is informed that his maximum purchase of spirits is five gallons.

Delaware has a rule that no more than twelve bottles of beer may be sold to any one purchaser in any one place at any one time — but there are a great many automobiles in Delaware, as elsewhere.

For a while after repeal arrived, Kentucky, the home of bourbon, was powerfully embarrassed by its dry laws. There it was, grinding up corn to please the people in all directions, without authority to sell any of it to the home folks. For Kentucky's own statutes were triple sec. But, when spring brought a fresh fragrance to the flowers and the blue grass burst out its bonnie bayonets, the General Assembly of Kentucky took cognizance of repeal in a manner which skeptics may deem merely another example of American hypocrisy but which the more enlightened will surely call a masterpiece of humor. On a balmy

April day when every colonel must have been of a mind to have his darky fetch a bit of mint from the bed in the back yard, the General Assembly decided to "take cognizance of the dangerous conditions" existing in Kentucky. Bootlegging, it recognized, was going on, and moonshining, too. "Exorbitant prices" were being de-



manded for "any good alcoholic liquors except those for medicinal, sacramental, scientific or mechanical purposes." The General Assembly thereupon made provision to license retail stores, hotels, restaurants, and clubs to sell "medicinal liquor by the bottle, drink or glass." The sage solons of the bourbon country then defined medical liquor as "any liquor containing any per cent of alcohol which is used as a curative, alleviative or palliative for bodily disorder or bodily pain, or as a tonic or stimulant for nervous or mental fatigue or other necessities of the human body." And in conclusion, suh, the General Assembly decided it would not be necessary to have a physician certify whether such necessities existed. With a trustful, democratic gesture any adult Kentuckian was authorized to buy liquor "if he deems it necessary for his health." In spite of that compassionate attitude toward the ailing citizen, the bootlegger is still in business in Kentucky — and not for his health, either.

Down in New Orleans, where there are as many cultivated palates per thousand inhabitants as in any city of the country, some of the older residents, along with the upstarts, still have Mississippi corn brought to their residences in charred barrels which the more patient sippers put aside to age. Often this Mississippi corn whisky when delivered, at seventy-five cents a quart and less, is older than any of the straight whisky available under five dollars a quart anywhere in the Kingfish's fief.

In most of the wet states the bootlegger has become more cautious and furtive than he was when Prohibition gave him the sympathetic protection of public opinion, but in numerous areas that remain theoretically arid he has come out since repeal into the open. This is particularly true in states where the sentiment seems predominantly wet but which have not yet given their electorates an opportunity to change the statutes.

In dry Florida some of the swankier hotels serve liquor openly.

In San Antonio, the mellowest of the cities of Texas, where only beer is yet legal, one may reach for a highball over the bar.

In the Carolinas, the only two states which voted against repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment, mountain dew is cheaper than ever,

while licensed liquor, which must be smuggled across the state lines (a more dangerous process now that the "federals" take the liquor laws seriously), is too costly for most middle-class pocketbooks.



IV

TO SUPPORT the contention that more hard liquor is being drunk in the United States than before Prohibition and that bootleggers supply the major portion of it, Mr. Choate, among other evidence, cites the thousands of seizures of stills made since the Treasury undertook the mission of what might be called the enforcement of repeal. In the last six months of the Prohibition era the enforcement personnel was so reduced that seizures dropped to an average of only five hundred a month. But since the Treasury set out to enforce wet laws instead of dry ones, its new tax unit has raided plants capable altogether of making each year far more distilled liquor than the public annually consumed in pre-war times. In the first four months of this year the limited field force of agents stumbled on and demolished sufficient distilling equipment to provide nearly ninety million gallons of whisky in twelve months. In May, thanks to an appropriation of seven million dollars, the field forces were enlarged, and the seizure of stills began to average nearly four hundred a week.

The bulk of these were not mere teakettle gadgets in back rooms or little wash-boiler outfits such as the moonshiners of the mountains have used for their corn mash since long before the Whisky Rebellion. Some of the stills which the "revenueurs" have found and demolished in recent months were contraptions higher than three-story buildings and as efficient and expertly manned as the machinery of the licensed distilleries. One might assume that although these seizures prove the prevalence of bootlegging each cuts down the capacity of the illicit manufacturer to compete with his more respectable rival. Such an assumption would be false. Mr. Choate is authority for the statement that "illicit distilleries are replaced as fast as they are seized."

Economically there is no reason why this replacement process should not continue so long as tariffs and taxes remain at existing levels or until a sufficient number of years have elapsed to mature the new whisky which legal distilleries are placing in storage. No straight whisky loses enough of its fire and early impurities to become smooth until it is at least four years old, but young straight whisky may be blended with older whisky and other spirits and be made palatable. For the time being, the bootlegger's advantage in price is not offset by a disadvantage in quality. If he knows his business and has aged some whisky to be used as a basis for blending — as have the more pretentious illicit concerns with years of experience and adequate capital — his product can be quite as pure and pleasurable as most of the liquor coming these days from the approved plants in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. The bootlegger, it is true, has nothing to tempt the palates of men who can afford to gratify a desire for pre-Prohibition, bottled-in-bond rye or bourbon, but scarcely a million gallons of such nectar remained in the distilleries when repeal arrived. Some of it has been used — quite sparingly — for blending with neutral spirits and greener whiskies. For that part of it offered untouched to the ultimate consumer, prices of seven dollars a bottle and upward have been demanded. Besides this rare and expensive pre-war bonded whisky, the only aged rye or bourbon available in the United States for legal distribution when repeal came was a few million gallons manufactured for medicinal purposes after the government had licensed seven distilleries in 1929 to resume limited operations. Much of what they made — and it amounted to only two million gallons a year — has been used for rectifying purposes. Such of it as is offered for sale as straight whisky four years old is five to ten times as expensive as was similar four-year-old liquor in pre-Prohibition days.

Anything marked "straight whisky, distilled autumn 1933" isn't worth drinking, and if it be already in bottle it never will be mellow, for straight whisky loses the fire of its youth and acquires smoothness only in wooden casks. In recent months, rye and bourbon drinkers have turned more and more to blends. As a

matter of fact, seventy per cent of the whisky they drank before Prohibition was blended. But it differed from many of the rapidly rectified whiskies of to-day in this: the heavy whiskies used for the pre-Prohibition blends were usually four years old at least, and oftentimes blends were mixtures of several matured whiskies with sherry — not a *mélange* of green liquor and neutral spirits.



V

TO AUGMENT the small amount of domestic liquor distilled before repeal, the only available matured whiskies of the American type are the Canadian stocks. These amount to about thirty million gallons. To bring this liquor across the frontier means paying a tariff of five dollars a gallon, the domestic tax of two dollars a gallon, a duty on glass, and sufficient stamp taxes and individual state imposts to run the total taxation above twenty dollars for a case of twelve quarts. The whisky itself is valued, even when five years old, at no more than sixteen dollars a case delivered to the wholesaler. When he and the retailer have taken their profits on such a base, the price per bottle gets well beyond four dollars. Largely because of the tariff, something less than two million gallons of mature Canadian whisky entered the consuming channels in the United States during the first eight months of repeal, and much of it got to the drinker's gullet only as a base in blends concocted in Illinois, Maryland, or Pennsylvania.

With the coming of repeal, Canada, along with countries overseas, was placed on a quota limiting its alcoholic-beverage exports to the United States. Meanwhile the Administration employed repeal as a horse-swapping talking point in an effort to force an increase of American exports of pork to England, pears to France, and other surplus commodities elsewhere. Yet the domestic distiller had so little mature liquor on hand that a smooth drink for every tongue that wanted it was an impossibility. Bitter complaints arose from drinkers asked to pay three, four, or five dollars a quart for newly made whisky which often tasted

worse than what the bootlegger had been providing. The quotas were suspended, but the tariff barrier was not lowered. In May the White House correspondents described President Roosevelt as "hoping the continued loosening of the quota restrictions in the next few months will do much to correct the situation." But it hasn't corrected the situation — either the high-price situation or the poor-quality situation — and it won't correct either of them for years to come unless a few bricks are knocked off the top of the tariff wall.

So much for rye and bourbon. Those of us who prefer Scotch to any other whisky are paying our tradesmen more for it this year than we paid the smuggler's salesman in 1933. Smuggling of foreign liquor has declined more than has domestic bootlegging, but it is far from being on its last legs, as is patent from the ship manifests out of St. Pierre et Miquelon, the recurrent rendezvous along coastal rum rows, and the airplane traffic in Scotch and brandies across the seventy-mile stretch of sea from West End, Bahamas, to Florida.

At its source, Scotch is little dearer to-day (from nine to twelve dollars a case) than it was before Prohibition. But where it formerly was assessed a duty of \$2.60 a gallon and a tax of \$1.10, it now is plastered with a tariff of five dollars and a domestic excise of two dollars a gallon. Noting that the taxes are only double what they were, the consumer may wonder why he is asked to pay three and four times the pre-war price for his bottle of Scotch, brandy, English gin, or West Indian rum. The explanation is that, whenever a tax is put upon a manufacturer or an importer, the price of the product affected is pyramided as it passes through the middlemen. Their *percentage* of profit may be the same as before, but the actual profit in dollars and cents per bottle or case is greater. In the case of liquor this merely serves to expand the differential in favor of the smuggler or the moonshiner.

As for wines, neither the domestic nor the

European are being bought in as large quantity as before the war, when the annual consumption was gradually mounting so that it had reached two quarts *per capita* when the drought set in. That is little more than a drop in the glass when compared with the Frenchman's thirty-two gallons a year, but at least it is larger than the Englishman's three pints. Those who hoped repeal might afford an opportunity to wean or educate the American from the heady grain to the joys of the grape are likely to be disappointed so long as taxes make a luxury of even a cloudy *vin ordinaire*.

Mr. Choate has persistently preached that taxes should be lowered if the bootlegger is to be eliminated. James M. Doran, formerly in charge of Prohibition enforcement, feels the same. However, Secretary Morgenthau of the Treasury, watching his deficits grow, still seems to think his men may be able to drive the bootlegger out of business without trying to starve him out by lifting some of the burden clamped on the approved wares sold by the licensed dealers. Well, the government tried for fourteen years to drive out the bootlegger — and failed.

Advocates of high taxation as a promoter of temperance point to the steady decline of whisky drinking in Great Britain, where since the war the government has been extracting eight shillings fivepence ha'penny out of the twelve shillings and sixpence charged for a fifth of any of the proprietary brands of Scotch or gin. That tax exceeds two hundred per cent *ad valorem*. But it should be remembered that, when it was instituted, the British had no bootleg industry to contend with. To endeavor to cut down hard-liquor consumption in the United States by applying extremely high taxes at a time when an illicit industry with fourteen years of experience is still in operation is to put the cart before the horse. It is to ask of the consumer what millions of him are presently unable or unwilling to pay — that is that the price of his new liberty shall be a good day's wage per quart.



AMONG THE YOUNGER WRITERS*

BY MARY M. COLUM

IN SPITE OF the fact that practically every educated person has some command of the tools of writing and that very few have any mastery of a musical instrument in the modern world, literature, nevertheless, is not as widely understood as music. For the hundred persons who can understand an opera or a symphony but one can really understand the poems of Keats or Baudelaire or any other profound poet. By "understand," readers of these articles know that I do not mean simply accessible to the intelligence or to the reason, for an art is only in a limited degree so accessible: I mean perceived by all the powers of the mind and the senses. It is necessary to say this to the eager young men, the younger generation, who are striking a fresh note in American poetry, so that they will not expect a nation-wide audience; if they get their books published at all they are lucky; if their first books are bought by a thousand readers they are remarkably lucky.

The volumes considered in this article, whether in prose or verse, are all by writers in their twenties, most of whom believe they have something new to say. Publishers' jackets, frequently being drafted by the authors whose works they enfold, are likely to say pertinent things, and on one before me is a statement to the effect that there is a resurgence of American literature — a statement which hits the mind with its truth. For at the moment there does indeed happen to be the beginning of a resurgence in American letters.

Whatever the value of the work of the young writers of any period, there is one thing a reader

can always gather from it: whether or not there are signs of a new age, of a literary expression different from what his elders achieved; and this there is evident in the work of the young poets before me — in Kimball Flaccus, Paul Engle, Elder Olsen, and in the farmer-poet, Jesse Stuart. The signs of a new age are here. It looks as if these young men had got wearied of the long degradation of humanity in the writing of the last decade or two, the persistent exposure of man on only his grossest and most banal side, which has been the occupation of so many outstanding writers since the war. We are glad that the urge of the minds of these young writers is toward lifting man from this fallen estate and toward giving him back in literature those poor bits of wings he has always had in life and toward revealing those immortal longings that were always in him and especially in those who made his songs and his epics, his art and his literature.

There is always in the history of every country, new or old, a moment when it has to make the decision, consciously or unconsciously, whether it is or is not going to forge for itself an heroic literature, to weave its mind, if you will, into a form of mythology which contains the symbols of its being. For myths and symbols are not only as essential to a country as the bread it eats: on their nature depends the very type of man the nation evolves. By all the signs of the moment, if I understand them aright, this country is about to start on the business of producing for itself certain forms of heroic poetry. The epic note is not only in the writers of this autumn, but last year also in the sweeping lines of MacLeish's *Conquistador* and in Hervey Allen's *Anthony Adverse* we felt once more the throb of the heroic spirit. It is badly needed, not only by the times but by the nation, for the heroism of the physical exploits which founded this country had but few echoes

* EDITOR'S NOTE: — The authors here considered are Kimball Flaccus (*Avalanche* of April; Scribner), Paul Engle (*American Song*; Doubleday, Doran), Elder Olsen (*Thing of Sorrow*; Macmillan), Josephine Johnson (*Now in November*; Simon and Schuster), William Maxwell (*Bright Centre of Heaven*; Harper), Simone Ratel (*The House on the Hill*; Macmillan), and Albert Halper (*The Foundry*; Viking).

in the creations of the mind. We have had little heroic or lyrical literature, perhaps because a pioneer nation has, in the very nature of things, to live its life in action, and action eventually seems to end in the desire of individuals to get the better of each other. The life of action on the part of all the people had here to precede the life of speculation and reverie on the part of the few who could awaken the spirit. Walt Whitman, it will be remembered, thought the awakening was imminent:

Then I will sleep awhile yet, for I see that these States
sleep for reasons;
(With gathering murk, with muttering thunder and
lambent shoots we all duly awake,
South, North, East, West, inland and seaboard, we
will surely awake.)

The awakening seems to have begun; perhaps it began a little while back.

II

FANTASTIC as has been the praise of one of these young poets, Paul Engle, there is undoubted evidence in his volume that he, as well as the others, is of those who are beginning to forge a new expression for America, though this new expression may wrap itself up in forms as old as literature, in epics and eclogues and georgics. The love of the land (as apart from Ku Klux Klan patriotics); the love of the soil; of the trees; of the river banks; of the canyons, prairies, and mountains; of the whole vast country, vaster than any country which has ever before forged for itself literary expression, is in all these young poets: it has shaped their minds and left its color on their words.

The georgics of Kimball Flaccus, called *Avalanche of April*, are a real spiritual history of New England. He sees the land that is, the land that was, the land the Indians hunted over:

These artifacts speak out to me across five thousand
moons. . . .

O wandering Indian tribes with burning eye
Hooded to probe horizons beyond distance,
Your loneliness is no more vast than mine,
Your sight is no more keen, your bronzed forearms
Are no such flails and reaping-hooks of light
As paddle and axe have taught mine how to be.

He is an accomplished poet, and his blank verse has an uncanny excellence for so young a writer. Yet there are stretches so blank that one

has to read it very carefully to make it distinguishable from prose. In this he is influenced by Robert Frost and somewhat by Jeffers, both poets who are more safely admired than imitated. Like all young poets whose gift is not purely lyrical, his thought, though occasionally profound, is sometimes, like that of Paul Engle, platitudinous; they are both so young that they do not know what milestones have been passed a thousand times before and have revealed the same secrets and sorrows to other poets in their singing seasons. Yet Flaccus' literary philosophy is an adult one and an up-to-date one, now, especially, when philosopher-scientists like Jeans and Eddington are returning to George Berkeley:

If there exist a land no brave Balboa
Ever beheld, that land does not exist;
A river, until it swirls away the flies
From dusty packhorses, is not a river;
No actual well becomes a paradise
Until some traveller with salt-caked tongue
Has swayed at evening towards the bright arroyos.

It seems to me that the poet could have got more lift and life into this kind of verse if, like his Indian chief, he had stood meditating, perched on a jutting crag, and then shouted the lines out until "the hound bayed at his feet," for this kind of verse, especially, needs the feel of the living voice behind it.

The other young poet, Paul Engle, gives the effect of having shouted his out too loudly and too often. He is rhetorical and eloquent, both qualities which the last generation judged to be serious faults in poetry, through, I think, a too one-sided interpretation of Paul Verlaine's *L'Art Poétique*. "Take eloquence and wring its neck," Verlaine had advised, and this was repeated by all the poets of this century, through a notion that what was good advice to a French poet might be equally good for an English-writing one. Eloquence in French was a deliberately studied effect — a logical, rhetorical manner which boys learned in school and college until they could hardly imagine any other sort of composition. But, in English, eloquence can be simply the brother of lyricism and is not to be outlawed as alien to high poetry: some of the most memorable lines in English poetry are eloquence pure and simple. But the secret of the effect of eloquence in poetry is to make it lyrical and not pulpit-like,

and Paul Engle sometimes hints of the pulpit or the forum. Any literary-minded schoolmaster could have shown him that lines like the following do not belong to poetry,

You did not have this old American courage,
You who feared life, you wept and tore your hair.

and too many, similar in sentiment and expression, which are scattered through the volume; they belong to melodrama or sermons. At the same time, I own to be amongst those who believe that Paul Engle may yet come to be a very fine poet, for he has a seer-like quality, a blazing vision and imagination which are more hopeful signs in a young writer than a too fastidious sense of form. When he writes,

Into that vaster and more savage West,
The unfamiliar country of your heart. . . .

Wander that land until your life has shaped
Over the last grave in the unmarked grass
A soul as splendid as your long going-up-and-down
In that land (*O England-forgetting, self-creating heart*)
so you

May shout out of dawn above the last night's fire
Before you swing again with the arc of the sun, a song
That will defy the little interval of man
In this American earth, so his memory in the world
Will last as long as light roams through the hollow
Ways of heaven.

we feel, in spite of non-scanable lines, a blast of the epic wind blowing from a world which every country has to discover for itself before it can know itself as adult — the world of heroic poetry. And when he writes in his "Letter to an Elder Generation,"

Something heroic passed when you were born,
Some mighty spirit that the earth will lack,
And men be craven and their living prideless
Until we give our lives to bring it back.

he speaks a thought that was stumbling unspoken in the minds of the young — that their elders, those now in the thirties and forties, did unnecessarily debase the spirit of man and that it was time a generation arose which should demand, "Give us back our divinities." It would be wrong, however, to allow oneself to be carried away by the heroic temper of the young poet's mind, for he has fallen heavily into those pits that especially beset American writers, the ordinary and the obvious — pitfalls always yawning before a writer who is only partly familiar with the traditions of his craft. The lack of self-criticism which permits him so

often to publish good and bad verses side by side may come simply from inexperience of life and literature, but there is a sad possibility that it may be inherent, for a certain distinction, a luminous quality which seems natural for a young poet to have, is not revealed in this first volume.

That unmistakable distinction is, on the other hand, in the poems of Elder Olsen; it is immediately revealed in such a poem as "To Man."

The shape of the blue wave
Bent only in your brain
In crystal arch and cave:
The pure prismatic rain
Fell not in any field,
And no flower grew
That had not root in you:
All beauty were concealed.

Save that your simple earth
Extended the dim bud,
And thrust the thin leaf forth
And gave the rose its blood.

This is the same philosophy as in Flaccus, but more subtly and intensely stated — Berkeleyan immaterialism, it is interesting to note. Elder Olsen, in fact, in this volume, *A Thing of Sorrow*, shows himself to be the most finely developed of the three poets considered here. At this stage, anyhow, he is above the other two in sheer poetic achievement: *A Thing of Sorrow* has distinction of thought, beauty of form, a rhythm that is personal; compared with its shivering sensitivity Engle's poetry might easily seem that of a barbarian. Nevertheless, there is a power in the other two — many varying moods for Olsen's single one and, in Engle's case, an almost elemental force — which suggests that in future it is they who may take the lead.

These three poets are in the early twenties, but there are some types of poetry that are done best of all by writers in "the laughing splendor of youth." It is a loss to literature that in this country youth is rarely either laughing or splendid, for it is too early weighted with responsibilities, in accordance with the pioneer tradition; a long and free youth is the secret which lies behind most high production in literature.

III

HOWEVER, if there are some types of poetry that are best written by the young, there

is no species of novel which is not better written by mature people. Like the poets, the novelists before me are all under thirty, but only one of them, Josephine Johnson, in *Now in November*, shows any deep communication with life. What she writes has that reality which is reached by a mind fertilized by some deep experience, though in her very merits there is something that suggests that she may not have it in her to produce many books.

Her novel deals with miserably poor, harassed people on a farm where some minor or major tragedy meets them at every turn. Yet every character in the story lives on a high plane of spiritual life, for, as in the work of the young poets, it is the spirit that is significant to her. Life is crushing on this farm, with its taxes and mortgages, and the author, without a touch or intention of propaganda and in a lyrical instead of a realistic manner, gives such a revelation of the terror life can be, lacking certainty of bread, as none of the class-conscious novelists with all their documentation and realistic detail and deliberate propaganda have achieved. To translate any kind of life into a book it is always the wisest plan to remain an artist.

Two other novelists who are likewise artists of a lyrical kind are William Maxwell, whose delightful if slender novel, *Centre of Heaven*, shows a beginning of great promise, and Simone Ratel, whose *House on the Hill*, a translation from the French, shows a finer psychological power than the works of any other of the young writers. These novels are especially noticeable because of their interesting technique, their fresh craftsmanship — the sort of craftsmanship that can be evolved only by writers well acquainted with the past of literature.

What is done for life on a farm in Josephine Johnson's novel is done for life in a workshop by Albert Halper in *The Foundry*. He seems to be one of those writers who go in determinedly for the production of what is called "proletarian literature" without knowing a great deal about literature of any kind. The story is chiefly about the goings-on of machines — large, shiny machines which the author seems to be crazy about: dynamos with their quaint offspring, cathodes and monsters of that sort, which, apparently, can behave in a most licen-

tious manner if an ill-disposed, sabotaging workman throws a powder or a liquid in the solution that makes them go.

The machine is the hero of the book and dominates in its superbness the mechanical human beings who minister to it. I have seldom read a work in which men were so degraded in the literal meaning of the word — reduced in grade — and in which the author seems so perfectly unconscious of their degradation. It is not that any of the characters is really bad or vicious — in fact, any court would regard them as law-abiding; their lives materially are not poverty-stricken or sordid; as the publisher's jacket tells us, they make good money. Yet they all live on a low plane untouched by that flash of the spirit which is even in the least-inspired lines of the poets I have been writing about. Why should workers in a foundry not be given the mien and habits of men? Have they not a right to the spiritual inheritance of the earth as they have to the much-shouted-for material inheritance? What is the use of giving people the means of living if there is no human end to live for? The lives projected by Albert Halper are devoid of all spiritual interest, all spiritual attachment.

I will own that his representational power is considerable; he has been a sharp observer of the outsides of men as well as the outsides of machines. He can write, "The cathodes came out nice and shiny like slim copper fishes, and it was a joy to watch their perfect sheen." "The scanty hair above his ears stood up like withered prairie-grass." This method of giving the object is that of the old-fashioned naturalism which has lingered on in the trade writers and those who do not know the changing and developing craft of the novelist. It is *passé* in authentic writing. Would not Mr. Halper, whose soul delights in machines, laugh heartily at a man who set about constructing an automobile without knowing much about the machines already made, even if this man could achieve a contraption that could go by itself? He would doubtless admire the native mechanical talent displayed but would wonder why the man did not take the trouble to learn his business. Approaching the reader in a hearty, salesman-like manner, he proceeds to reveal one of his characters: "Well, folks, in the spring, as a general rule, the senior partner

did not suffer so acutely from his hemorrhoids, and this spring, sir, was no exception." The hemorrhoidal side of this man is practically all we ever know about him, but that is done with thorough realism. The author has no power of penetrating to the interior lives of men; he knows the outside workings of machines and the external behavior of a group of men turned into machines. Everything in the book — men, machines, and episodes — could be better revealed by a camera, for it is all on a level untransformed by thought or feeling. Literature, like every other art, is the imprint of mind upon matter; it is not the photographic representation of matter.

IV

LET US NOTE that the method used in *The Foundry* and which is likely to be used again and again in novels of this genre is the now archaic method which Zola put in the hands of his followers, or rather it is the method developed by the group which came after him. For them, the novel was to be an exact imitation of reality or what they thought was reality, but, as this is a word which means diverse things to different minds, they clarified their notions into neat formulas. They discarded Zola's more extreme ideas of demonstrating "scientific" truth and the effect of heredity and put forward the following: a writer should relate only what he has scrupulously observed; the matter of the novel should be the daily, the banal, the ordinary, without any great flights to it — the life of the majority being made up of crude and ugly instincts without spirituality; real life is not that of the cultivated classes, it is the life of the greatest number; the novel, therefore, will be the depiction of the life of the masses.

The mind of the writer was ignored altogether in this body of doctrine — the mind of the writer, which is the chief ingredient in literature. It being settled that the novel was the

depiction of the life of the masses, Zola, who regarded himself as republican, socialist, and communist, finished off the rest of humanity in a few sentences: the aristocratic, the rich, and the bourgeois were all debauchees, cruel and obtuse; generosity, goodness, and real thought were to be found only in the masses and in such intellectuals as gave their adherence to the naturalist republic.

Lest my readers imagine that in a fit of aberration I may be quoting some Soviet commissar or neighboring communist, I refer them to Zola's writings on the novel. There is not a solitary principle put forward to-day by the exponents of proletarian culture which was not invented, put into practice, and then generally discarded by the French naturalists of fifty years ago. The best of them, being men of powerful imagination and lyrical temperament, like Zola himself, were in practice incapable of carrying the formula out to its ultimate dullness.

Considering the retrograde literary formulas to which we have clung, the truth about us moderns who have worked such miracles in science seems to be that in three quarters of a century we have invented so few ways of expressing ourselves in language that literature in our time is in a bad way indeed — sterile, anæmic, in a rut. Except for the achievements of Joyce and Proust in the novel, what have we to show in the way of invention?

As for the new, after-war poetry, the expression which Eliot, Pound, and their school were supposed to have given the "hollow men" of our generation, it amounted to little more than the feat — a virtuoso's feat, I admit — of transferring into English a form of poetic expression that had been developed in France in the 'eighties of the last century; and I for one am not convinced that any of this after-war group added anything significant in form, philosophy, or content to what Laforgue, their chief master, who died in 1887, attained.

Interscholastic Poetry Contest

THE Editor announces a poetry contest, with three prizes of \$50, \$30, and \$20, open only to students of American preparatory and high schools. Entries must be made before February 1, 1935.

For complete details and instructions, see page VI in advertising section.

I LIKE THE RUSSIANS

BY GEORGE F. HAVELL

Mr. Havell is Managing Editor of *THE FORUM*. He has been abroad since early July of this year, in Greece, Italy, Austria, Germany, and France as well as Russia.

Naples, Italy
August 28, 1934

DEAR BOSS,

Salutations to the colleagues, and affectionate regards to yourself!

Well, I have spent a month in Russia, and in thirty days one can hardly scratch the surface; I'd like to know how the blokes who spend three days in Moscow can write books about their experiences!

In the United States it seems to be a generally accepted notion that visitors to the U. S. S. R. are severely restricted. That simply is not true. I was quite free to come and go at all times as I pleased. If I failed to see the worst as well as the best, it was my own fault. So far as I know, only the political prison camps, in distant parts of the Union, are closed to travelers from abroad.

It is unfortunate that the American attitude about all things Russian is still so highly charged with emotion and so largely based on misconceptions. Anyone who has a decent word to say for the New Russia and the communist system is suspect as a red. As a nominal Republican, I shall deny the allegation!

Anyway, my chief desire is to tell the truth, but I have a suspicion that, after they read this, Russians will think I am panning them too hard and Americans who have been there will think I am letting them off too easily.

While I think we may profit from the Russian experiment, I do not believe that we will find communism congenial to our national temperament until we too have a long history of social oppression and class hatred. Russia was ready for revolution in 1917. No fair-minded person can read Russian history and

regret the passing of the old order, however much he may deplore the manner of that passing. But our system, out-of-joint as it seems to be at the moment, can still be patched without benefit of Marx.

The first two questions every traveler from the U. S. S. R. is asked to answer are: "How are living conditions?" and "Do you think Russia will succeed?"

Living conditions in Russia this summer were not good, judged by any reasonable American standard. I know! But even Russians who are out of sympathy with the whole business admit that things are much better than they were last year and the year before. However, in the cities, especially in Leningrad and Moscow, the housing facilities are sadly inadequate to care for the tens of thousands who have flocked in from the country to work in the factories. Whole families have to live in single rooms. Two families may share a three-room apartment. The official space allotment is only nine square meters per person. In Leningrad, a block away from the best hotel, I saw a large group of workmen sleeping in a cellar, and the stench that reached the sidewalk was revolting.

Due regard for the normal reticences aside, no story of the Soviet Union in this year of grace is complete without some reference to evil odors and other unpleasant matters. Toilet facilities, even in the best hotels, range from inadequate to unspeakable. Tap water is not potable unless it is boiled. When our chief guide was berated for the notably atrocious outhouse attached to the hotel at Passanauer, in the Caucasus Mountains, he said sadly, "All you Americans think about is toilets"! The Russians seem to have been concerned with matters more pressing than the installation of sanitary facilities or even of pure water supplies. Bent on nothing less than economic self-sufficiency in a hostile world of capitalistic

nations, they are forced to wait for things that we class among the irreducible amenities.

The food supply seems to be adequate, but the most humble American would hardly be satisfied with the black bread, cabbage, soup, potatoes, *kasha* (a kind of rice), and summer vegetables which form the common diet of most Russians. But they seem to thrive on it! As a foreign tourist, I enjoyed a much greater variety. Certainly there was always plenty of it.

On second thought, the word "enjoyed" is not very appropriate; I became heartily tired of Russian provender after the first week, and at one time or another it made most of our party ill. Some of the Russian dishes, however, are excellent — *borsch* (cabbage soup), beef Stroganoff (stew), for example — and their tomatoes are delicious. I had cucumbers three times a day, except when there was a fourth meal. There was never any milk that could safely be consumed without boiling, except in Rostov-on-Don. The best milk goes to children and invalids.



The central problem of the 2nd 5-year plan is in the state farms and collectives.

I entered the country at Belo-OstrovTM on July 17. After about ten days in Leningrad and Moscow I went east to Gorod Gorki, down the Volga to Stalingrad, across the steppes to Rostov-on-Don and Ordzonikidze, and thence over the Georgian Military Highway to Tiflis. From Tiflis I turned west to Batum and followed the eastern and northern shores of the Black Sea to Odessa, whence I sailed for Athens and Naples on the sixteenth.

As I went south in Russia, the food improved. In fact, the south of Russia was the only place there where it was possible to get fresh fruit. For Moscow is still reaping the whirlwind sown when strong-arm methods were used upon the peasants several years ago in an effort to force collective farming methods, and efficient distribution of food stuffs is hampered by the lack of proper transportation facilities.

The food question in the U. S. S. R. is by no means settled. This year's wheat crop at the huge state grain farm at Verblud, where I visited, is decidedly poor. And the grain crops throughout the whole Ukrainian region ("the bread basket of Russia") are reported to be far below normal. This may have unpleasant repercussions next winter. Meanwhile, wheat is still being exported.

The best consumers' goods — clothing, shoes, tooth paste, soap, and the like — are exported or reserved for sale to those in the U. S. S. R. who possess foreign credit. Most of the goods in stores where purchases may be made in Soviet currency are of inferior quality. All are made in Russia.

In nearly 4,000 miles of travel in the Soviet Union I did not see a single smartly dressed woman. Again, of course, I am judging by American standards, which is hardly fair, I suppose. And it must be remembered that under the second Five Year Plan more attention is being paid to consumers' goods. There are luxuries, or semi-luxuries, in most of the stores and there are even perfume shops. These, I suspect, are "window dressing" — at which the Russians are very proficient.

II

WILL THE U. S. S. R. succeed? I do not see how it can fail, given about two generations, and provided that peace can be maintained. The Russians do not want war; it would wreck

their carefully laid economic program.

My faith in the future of the Soviet Union is based upon its young people. I met many of them and I have the greatest admiration for them. They are ambitious, not only for themselves but for their country. They are serious-minded and eager to become proficient in their work. They are generous and friendly. And with all their serious side they are fun-loving and gay of temperament; such is the paradox of the Russian character.

I spent a day at Celam, a rest home for graduate university students, a few miles east of Yalta, on the Black Sea. The main building was once the summer residence of some wealthy citizen. At Celam, *Amerikanski* were interesting and honored guests; for our benefit the normal day's program was abandoned. We spent the morning bathing in the Black Sea and in discussing political and economic philosophy. After lunch there was a splendid impromptu concert; and how these young Russians can sing! When we left, in the evening, the entire camp population came down to the dock and loaded us with flowers from the beautiful gardens of the resort.

This younger generation is keenly interested in physical culture and mass athletics. Throughout the country there are athletic clubs and physical-culture groups of young men and women, most of them organized within large factories or trade unions. Every member of such a group engages actively in the program — men and girls alike. For all Russians love to be outdoors, and many of them are deeply tanned by the sun — even workers in the factories. Some of these youths and girls are magnificent physical specimens, especially the latter, who carry themselves exceedingly well.

While I was in Moscow I visited a rowing club on the Moscow River, where the members were preparing to participate in a huge physical-culture demonstration in the Red Square. There were about a hundred girls and the same number of young men, none of them over thirty, dressed alike in white, sleeveless jerseys and shorts. It was the healthiest-looking crowd of young people I have ever seen. And that day there were hundreds of such groups marching in perfect order through the streets of Moscow into the Red Square, where they were reviewed by high Soviet officials; for the health of the

citizens is more than a minor concern of the government. Such marching groups, large or small, are a common sight in Russia, especially in Moscow. Sometimes they are youths and girls, sometimes soldiers, but almost always they are singing the Red Army Song or another of their stirring airs.

Young Russians have a tendency to interpret everything in terms of the Marxian philosophy which is drilled into them from an early age. A girl student at the University of Moscow who proposes to become a refrigeration engineer (boy, how Russia needs her!) was asked what subjects she studied. "Marx," she replied, and seemed quite confident that her reply was adequate. The system appears better adapted to training philosophers than technicians. But anyone in Russia who can clean a spark plug is an "engineer." Ask him.

Aside from their biased political ideology, young Russians have a refreshingly direct approach to the troublesome problems young people have to face. Of course religion does not



*Let us be masters of
cultural recreations.*

cause them any concern; the phenomena that the rest of the world explains in terms of a deity they calmly account for in terms of science. And, of course, women have achieved complete equality of opportunity with men. Except for the heaviest physical tasks there is no kind of work that women may not do.

Boys and girls, as well as men and women, are treated with strict impartiality. Small boys troop off to the nearest swimming hole just as they do everywhere else — only the small girls go with them! With them, too, they go to their Young Pioneer camps. At Artek, the Young Pioneer camp near Yalta, I saw six hundred of them, from ten to sixteen years — a splendid lot of kids — from all over the Union. Artek has its own soviet system of self-government, and its visible results upon conduct are truly amazing. At these camps the boys and girls sleep in separate dormitories; otherwise no distinctions are made between them.

As a result of this kind of upbringing there is no nonsense about sex. By this, however, I do not mean to intimate that young Russians are sexless or abnormal. Whatever else the Revolution may have done, it does not seem to have interrupted materially the familiar processes of falling in love and marrying. But there is a notable absence of the mystery and pruriency that characterizes sex relations elsewhere. There is no evidence of prostitution in Russia, nor of any other kind of commercialized vice. I saw little drunkenness.

Will Rogers exaggerated when he said that "there are no bathing suits in Russia." There are plenty of them, of the briefest and most sensible kind. And while there is also a great deal of bathing in the nude, the behavior of Russians on their beaches is infinitely more decorous and decent than that of many Americans on theirs, clothes to the contrary notwithstanding. Russians — especially the young citizens — are essentially healthy-minded.

I hope you have not gathered the impression that I believe each individual there to be a model of virtue and deportment. I have seen fair samples of those who are not. But, by and large, they are extraordinarily worth-while and self-respecting young people. They intend, most of them, to make their lives count for something. One of them, just old enough to remember the old régime, said to me, "You

**ОВЛАДЕВАЯ ТЕХНИКОЙ, БУДЬ В ПЕРВЫХ
РЯДАХ СТРОИТЕЛЕЙ СОЦИАЛИЗМА**



While mastering technique—be in the front ranks of builders of socialism.

may think that we do not have very much now, and that is true. But, before, we had nothing and we had no chance of getting anything or being anybody. Now, everyone has a chance. I would gladly die to help the new order." These were no heroics, but quiet statements of fact. And this Russian was no exception to his fellows.

III

OF COURSE any fair judgment of the Soviet Union must be made on the basis of conditions before the Revolution, rather than conditions in the United States or Western Europe to-day. And veritably the U. S. S. R. has become a workers' land. The true Soviet aristocrat is the "shock worker" — one who is especially proficient and energetic.

Workers and their children receive many special privileges, including preferential admission to the technical schools and universities. Each factory has its group of "social institutions": hospitals, nurseries, and clubs. Every

important union has its sanitariums, where workers who are ill may go to recuperate. The best modern apartments are usually available only to workers in the factories. Those engaged in very heavy labor get special food.

I met only one of the "former people" while I was in the country. She is a charming woman who is the daughter of a one-time czarist general and who has been accepted in the new order and is now a responsible employee in a government office. Apparently the once cruel and uncompromising attitude toward those formerly well-to-do has been relaxed. For the Russians have indeed been more intelligent in their treatment of criminals than they have been in dealing with the bourgeoisie. They "re-educate" thieves and murderers and make them useful members of society. But the "former people," many of whom had much to contribute to the new order, were largely driven into hiding or harried out of the country.

There has been, and still is, a sort of war-time psychology in the Soviet Union — a psychology roughly comparable to our national state of mind during the World War. As we bent every effort to win the war and persecuted those who obstructed those efforts, so have the Russian Communists struggled to establish their system and carry out their economic plans, without mercy on those who stand in the way. The all-powerful Communist Party is, and always has been, a minority group. It must govern or go, and it governs with an iron hand.

Russia has had tremendous handicaps to overcome: widespread illiteracy, the dead weight of an unbelievably primitive peasantry, racial differences within the Union, and the hostility of the other nations of the world. Great progress has been made. Illiteracy is being rapidly "liquidated" as the result of universal compulsory education. The leaven of some new ideas has been pounded into the peasant mass, for the Russians are past masters of the art of visual education. The more troublesome racial differences have been resolved. And the world is less aloof. The greatest gain on this front was when President Roosevelt had the tolerance and foresight to extend the diplomatic recognition of the United States. Even more, his choice of our first ambassador was a happy one. Almost every Russian who

has heard of Stalin can also tell you who William Bullitt is!

Present-day Russia is a land of strange contradictions. The communist system is intended to create decent economic conditions and absolute political freedom for all. After seventeen years of it, most Russians have achieved little more than the bare subsistence level. I have seen in the Soviet Union the most abject poverty I have ever seen anywhere. A few enjoy relative comfort. Certainly there is no equality of economic condition in Russia today.

Nor is there any political freedom, as we know it. The lives of the citizens are regulated and regimented at every turn. The press is an organ of government and serves its ends purely. (You can't realize how out of touch with the world I have been since I left England. In Russia we got no news at all.) But it is not so much a question of regulation by the super-bureaucracy of the government or by a Machiavellian G. P. U. It is the force of public opinion that really cracks down. In the U. S. S. R. the smart citizen listens to it.

On the other hand, the Russians have in some ways achieved real freedom, especially in the phases of life that are still hedged round with taboos in the western world. Certainly the new ideas about marriage and the whole relation between the sexes are based upon complete freedom of the individual. In Russia, women may even choose whether or not to bear children. All the restrictions imposed by the old religion have been discarded. And, although I am sure that my Russian friends would be horrified at the notion, it seems to me that devotion to the cause of the new order has, in large measure, supplanted religion. Then, too, the sort of thing we call "keeping up with the Joneses," that causes so many heartaches at home, is conspicuous by its absence in the Soviet Union.

In the land of paradox that is Russia, the greatest paradox is this: the only anti-religious country in the world is trying out a system that has its roots in the Second Commandment — "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

My warmest regards. It will be good to get home, but I am having a swell time and shall hate to leave.

George

A CALENDAR OF CONTROVERSY



November, 1934

GREAT BRITAIN VS. THE UNITED STATES *All's Foul*

MR. JOHN KIERAN of the *New York Times* dubbed the incident "Luff's Labor Lost." No one knows exactly what to make of it. Mr. T. O. M. Sopwith, owner and skipper of the British America's Cup challenger *Endeavour* swore that Mr. Harold S. Vanderbilt of the defending *Rainbow* ran afoul of him at the start of the fourth race and later refused to respond to a luff, which is to say in lay terms, refused to give Mr. Sopwith a right of way to which he thought he was entitled.

After considerable haggling in the streets of staid Newport and in lengthy news dispatches, the matter ultimately resolved to whether Mr. Sopwith had sent up his protest signal within the time limit allowed by the rules governing the alleged offense. He had not. Furthermore, there were many who said that it was Mr. Sopwith who had run afoul, for fouling in yacht racing is frequently a near academic question.

The New York Yacht Club race committee, which had to make the decision, announced that because of Mr. Sopwith's tardiness it could not hear his protest. It argued that by Mr. Sopwith's delay in showing his protest signal Mr. Vanderbilt was automatically prevented from making counter charges to defend himself.

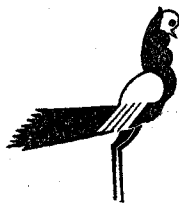
In the sixth and final race, with *Rainbow* leading, three races to two, both boats had protest flags flying before they crossed the starting line. *Endeavour* broke out a bit of bunting resembling a large, red tablecloth, held out by two sailors to be sure that no one would miss seeing it. The big sloops tore around the course like two infuriated bull whales. But Mr. Vanderbilt, who had raised his protest flag first, finished first, just fifty-five seconds ahead of *Endeavour*, charging after him with a great bone in her teeth. Mr. Sopwith said that he had intended to protest Mr. Vanderbilt's start but that, as he had won the start and lost the race fairly, he would drop his charges. And thus *Rainbow* won.

After the races Mr. Sopwith an-

nounced that he was "disappointed" at the treatment he had received at the hands of the race committee. He discounted the fact that in the first race the committee delayed the start in order to give him time to set his mainsail and that in the matter of protests it had acted strictly according to the rules. But, regardless of what he might say of the officials, Mr. Sopwith could not complain of the treatment he received at the hands of the press and the general public. In the United States the sentiment was overwhelmingly in his favor to win, simply because most Americans think the cup has remained too long in this country.

There was a considerable difference of opinion as to who was right in the whole affair, although there was no doubt that *Endeavour* was the better boat and Mr. Vanderbilt the better skipper. The greatest loss to both sides was the feeling of bad sportsmanship, a situation that has not existed in the cup races since the malodorous Lord Dunraven affair in 1895.

DECISION: *To Mr. Vanderbilt, who at least succeeded in retaining the America's Cup.*



CROWN VS. THE PRESS *Gentlemen, the King!*

WHEN THE United States Senate decided to investigate the connivances of munition makers it well knew it would find stench bombs, too. As the probing committee delved deeper and deeper into the muck, it suddenly discovered that the names of His Majesty King George V of England and His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales had been used in connection with potent arguments to convince foreign powers that they should buy British arms. The shocked *Morning*

Post headlined the story, "United States Inquiry Canard," remarked testily, "We publish this incredible story as illustrating the sort of evidence which was thought good enough for a Senatorial enquiry."

Not only did the Senate think it was good enough evidence, but it elaborated on it, finding many another foreign potentate mixed up with the graft and super-salesmanship methods of munitions manufacturers. Finally the pressure on the State Department from foreign nations became so great that it was decided to hold the committee investigations in secret and thus save the faces and fair names of many harassed government officials.

DECISION: *Munitions are a dirty business.*

LEON TROTZKY VS. THE WORLD *Who Has Him?*

THE UNITED PRESS reported last month that that arch-revolutionist, Leon Trotsky, was the prey in a game of hare and hounds in Madrid to round up socialists. The French police, who had recently found M. Trotsky barricaded in a house on the outskirts of Paris, insisted that he was still in southern France. The most original theory as to the whereabouts of the evasive Russian was advanced by the American press, which issued a carefully buried story to the effect that M. Trotsky has recently been seen walking about in New York's ultra-capitalistic Wall Street. Wherever he has been reported, his presence has been received with the same display of inhospitality.

DECISION: *To M. Trotsky, a singularly elusive hare.*

PATRIOTISM VS. THE PAINTER *L'Art Pour L'Art*

THE WESTCHESTER Institute of Fine Arts at Tarrytown, N. Y., exhibited a canvas four by eight feet entitled "Nightmare of 1934." It was enigmatically signed "Jere Miah II, P. W. A. (Poor White Artist)." Central figures were President Roosevelt and a heartless

caricature of his wife. Other figures were Anna Roosevelt Dall and her brother Elliott discarding their spouses into a waste basket. Full prominence was also given to the President's official family. Secretary Wallace was tying Agriculture up in knots, Secretary Morgenthau juggling money, Hugh S. Johnson symbolizing irascibility and truculence. Very thoroughly and comprehensively the picture set about to poke malicious fun at the New Deal Administration. Someone from Wall Street reputedly offered to pay three thousand dollars for the picture to present it to the Library of Congress.

No Republican, no Wall Street potentate was John Smiuske, who dutifully paid his twenty-five cents to see the picture, marched boldly up to it, threw paint remover on its surface, dragged it to the floor, and set a match to the canvas. Promptly he was hauled off to jail, where Republican Judge William A. H. Ely sentenced him to six months in the penitentiary. At the end of that time Mr. Smiuske will be rearraigned for illegal entry into the United States.

He excused himself by saying, "It was all right except for including Mrs. Roosevelt and her children. It is a disgrace to bring a woman into a thing like this, and besides it's a lousy painting not worth five cents."

DECISION: *Mr. Smiuske was a bit impulsive.*

STRIKERS VS. THE MACAULAY COMPANY

Labor Troubles on Parnassus

LIKE TEXTILE manufacturers, the Macaulay Company, book publishers in Manhattan, has been having difficulty with its employees over a charge of discriminating against union members. Picket lines were thrown around the offices of the company, and such distinguished left-wing writers as Louis Adamic, Edward Dahlberg, Seldon Rodman marched round and round until the police charged their lines and attempted to break up the demonstration.

Best known picketer was William Gilbert Patten, author of most of the 775 Frank Merriwell books. Moved by the struggle of the working classes, Mr. Patten, who is now engaged in presenting his immortal hero to radio audiences, said that if he wrote another Merriwell book he would make Frankie a striker.

Ancients who knew Frank when he was the Peerless Yale Fullback regularly laying the Harvard eleven low with one hand will either be surprised at this or call it a sign of the times. They will remember when Frank Merriwell broke a railroad strike to earn enough money to complete his seemingly endless matriculation at Yale.

DECISION: *To the literati, who have at last mustered up enough courage to fight for their rights, peerless Frank Merriwell included.*

ITALY VS. THE WORLD

Roman Victory

EVERY year on Labor Day it is customary to have a lifeboat race among the crews of ships lying in New York harbor. This year Mussolini had been reported as interested in the outcome. Consequently, the racing crew of the *Conte di Savoia* was thoughtfully regarded as the dark horse.

The day was rainy, but the nine heavy boats pulled grimly through the choppy Hudson over the two-mile course. With a final spurt the boat of the *Conte di Savoia* flashed across the finish line first.

But, as seems to be the custom in modern boat racing, rumored protests began to fly. It was said that the Italian boat was not a regular lifeboat but a racing cutter. Sailors who take the race seriously were inclined to take the allegations seriously. Along the waterfront there was considerable acrimonious bickering back and forth. None the less, the *Conte di Savoia* sailed with her trophy safe aboard to show to Il Duce.

DECISION: *Like Mr. Vanderbilt, they have the cup.*



FLEAS VS. WOMAN

Insecticide

MISS MARIE HOEGLINGER of Obereith, Austria, was sixty-two years old. For months she complained to the master of the house in which she had served long and faithfully that the fleas were unbearable. They got into her clothing, her hair, gave her no privacy in her own bed.

Her master was inclined to scoff and lend no aid in her war against the pests. At last Marie Hoeglenger could stand it no longer. Very methodically she fired the house of her master as a final and decisive gesture against her ubiquitous foes. Unfortunately, the court considered her measures too drastic a cure for her trouble. They sentenced her to eighteen months in prison. Said the judge, "Except for the fact that the property was of little value, I would sentence you to death."

DECISION: *Certainly not to the fleas.*

RUSSIA VS. THE UNITED STATES

The Red Flag Mystery

HERALD Island is a small dot five miles long and nine hundred feet high, in the Arctic Sea north of Siberia, forty miles east of the much disputed Wrangell Island. It was reputedly discovered by the James Gordon Bennett Expedition in 1881 and named after Mr. Gordon's newspaper, the old *New York Herald*. In 1916 the Russian Government notified the United States and Great Britain that she considered all the islands near her arctic coast an integral part of the empire.

Last month a dispatch to Moscow from the Soviet ice breaker *Krassin* reported that the crew of the *Krassin* had landed on Herald Island and reaffirmed Russia's claim. The United States has never recognized the pretensions of any other nation to this islet or to certain others nearby that may become important air refueling bases. The report that a red flag was flying on Herald Island brought grave silence from both the United States State Department and the Soviet Embassy.

DECISION: *None.*

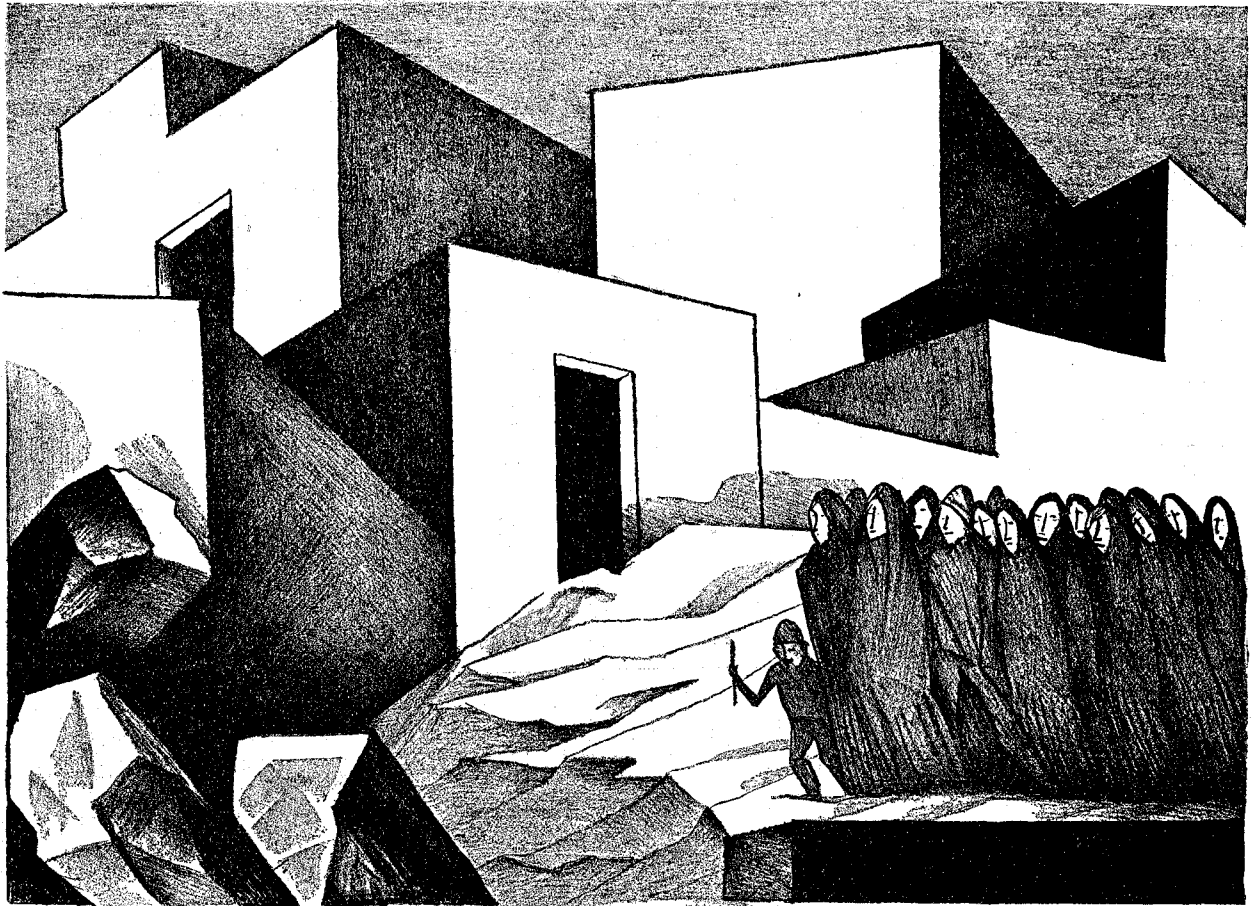
ASBURY PARK VS. ASBURY PARK

Commercialization

WHEN THE smoldering hulk of the holocaustic *Morro Castle* drifted up on the beach of Asbury Park, New Jersey, the business men of the city were not slow to realize that a pot of gold had been dumped into their front yard. Luckily, the ship drifted to within a few feet of Convention Hall Pier, which at once became a ring-side seat for those whose morbid curiosity drove them out to gaze on the wreck. These thousands who flocked to Asbury Park soon discovered that it was possible to enjoy the advantages of a view from Convention Hall only upon paying a substantial entrance fee. Stories soon began to fly along the boardwalk that the city was going to buy the ship from the Ward Line as a permanent exhibit, so great was its drawing power.

Such a display was to City Councilman Dr. Max Silverstein "shocking and revolting." Vigorously he and his adherents opposed the measure. Mayor Sherman O. Dennis announced that Asbury Park was not going to buy the skeleton for any such purpose. And, besides, the fee from the Convention Hall business was donated to the Red Cross. City Manager Carl H. Bischoff said that the city was going to acquire the *Morro Castle* not as a gigantic wax-work exhibit, but for a jetty.

DECISION: *Reserved.*



Courtesy of the Weyhe Galleries

Mexican Pueblo

TWO LITHOGRAPHS

BY JOSÉ CLEMENTE OROZCO

JOSÉ CLEMENTE OROZCO, one-armed Mexican of radical leanings, is famed chiefly as a muralist, in which field he is ranked as a peer of Diego Rivera, whose Rockefeller Center murals (reproduced in the April FORUM) aroused so much controversy last winter. Orozco's best-known work is perhaps his fifteen-paneled decoration of Dartmouth College's new Baker Library. The United States' biggest fresco, this work was begun in January, 1933, and finished in February, 1934. It covers 3,000 square feet of wall space, and is entitled *Epic of American Civilization*.



Mexican Woman

THE PRIVATE LIFE OF STAVISKY—II

BY JAMES WHITTAKER



Drawings by Lewis Daniel

VI

IT IS A classic bank fraud and illustrates the fact, so well appreciated by rogues and so complacently ignored by ingenuous investing multitudes, that the modern financial structure of nations is as full of holes as a dead oak.

The squirrels of the fiscal forests, from the little red Check Bouncers up to the big gray bushy-tailed Insulls and Kruegers, know all the chinks and crannies well; and that is why they can disappear so amazingly the moment public indignation starts to rise.

The trick might be called the "double-or-quits" and involves as preparation the dual identities Sascha has established for himself, under his real name and that of Georges Alexandre, the quietly prosperous retired gentleman of 4 rue Edouard-Detaille. A pretty woman is not indispensable but is serviceable, as we shall see when Arlette and her master prowl forth one midnight in search of a supper.

At the bank he patronizes under two names, the account of the authentic citizen, Serge Stavisky, son of the well-known dentist, is a fairly large one. It is just now swelled to a

grand total, because, in preparation for his *coup*, Sascha has boldly cleaned out his father's hoard, nailing the gold drawer fast and knowing that this time next week the contents will be replaced in full or the thief exposed. The account of M. Alexandre is a smaller current drawing account, never large, never overdrawn, the typical personal-expenses account of a retired gentleman living on invested funds. There have been enough small transfers from the Stavisky account to the Alexandre account to accustom bank officers to the idea that the latter derives some little income from investments with Stavisky, the active market man. Alexandre is known to Vice President Duvert, customers' man, as an affable caller seen regularly twice a week. M. Alexandre is plump and wears a beard. Duvert has seen Stavisky but once, some time since, when the latter opened his account. But Stavisky's signature and balance are things he knows. M. Stavisky is thin and clean-shaven.

M. Duvert, this midnight, is also supping out with a week-end lady friend, a detail which M. Alexandre has made it his business to ascertain before entering the Booted Cat with Arlette on his arm.

Our hero's seat in the restaurant room commands a view of M. Duvert's table, and these two naughty citizens on the tear are presently exchanging discreet grimaces of mutual congratulation, meaning that M. Alexandre estimates M. Duvert's black-eyed companion to be a mean number and that M. Duvert can return the flattery double for his customer's judgment in blondes.

Arlette soon pats a yawn, and her escort considerably calls for his bill. A *contretemps*! He has stupidly left home without cash. But wait! Here is a small check for 120 francs, enough to cover the debt. True, he is not known here, but if the head will be so good as

to ask M. Duvert, the well-known banker over there, to endorse the slip of paper, the latter will doubtless oblige.

Taking M. Alexandre's note from the tray, M. Duvert's banker instinct is to frown, but, on glancing to catch M. Alexandre's mock-desperate pantomime, he decides to grin. Anyway, the check is not only small but is made by customer Stavisky to customer Alexandre, either one of whom is good for the trifling sum. M. Duvert scribbles an endorsement and shrugs deprecation of M. Alexandre's wig-wagged gratitude. Whereupon, the endorsed check being back in M. Alexandre's hands, the latter makes the surprising discovery that he has a 500-franc note he overlooked and will not need to cash the check after all. He receives his change and, with Arlette, departs in a taxi.

VII

A CHECK is cleared intramurally in the bank the next day. It is a larger one than usually passes between the accounts involved. No doubt that is why Messieurs Stavisky and Alexandre have taken the precaution of having it endorsed by M. Duvert, customers' man, unavailable, at the moment, because visiting an ailing country aunt over the week-end.

No one in the bank thinks it remarkable that M. Alexandre should convert the 120,000-franc check at once into a selection of the bank's best bonds. Bonds make the owner money. One hundred and twenty thousands in a drawing account do not. No man with any judgment will let capital lie idle overnight. M. Alexandre receives his bonds. What he does with them is his own affair.

On the Monday, depositor Stavisky favors the bank with his first visit since opening his account some months since. He is passing and needs 50,000 at once. The teller interrupts him as he picks up the pen.

"But, M. Stavisky, your balance isn't that much right now."

M. Stavisky's pen becomes motionless. The teller senses something wrong.

"*Comment!* I haven't got 50,000 francs? What is this nonsense?"

"But the transfer of 120,000 on Friday," reminds the teller with sinking voice. "The check to M. Alexandre."

He sees storm signals in the customer's eyes

and turns to produce the check in question.

From exclamations and oaths M. Stavisky progresses to a contention. He issued no such check. As the bank well knows, his few transactions with Alexandre have always been in small sums. As a matter of fact and if they wish to know, M. Alexandre is a chap, a casual baccarat-table acquaintance, an elegant pauper, whom he has favored from time to time at the green table by buying his personal jewelry.

"Why" — Stavisky slaps his brow — "this must be that 120-franc check I gave the man for his stick pin Thursday, a garnet! A hundred and twenty francs, monsieur, not 120,000!" He makes discoveries. The word "thousand" in the kited check is a good imitation of his handwriting but not good enough, and look how it is crowded in! The three thin-waisted numerals after the "120" are obviously added in. Now that they are demonstrated, the teller can see the signs of forgery too.

Absently Stavisky turns over the canceled draft, and then his eyes really bulge.

"What is this! The endorsement of — yes — of M. Duvert. Is that your customers' man's signature, yes or no? What game is this? Your M. Alexandre and your M. Duvert! Do they split my money half and half? Ha! I think not!"

M. Stavisky grabs his hat.

"Where are you going?" faintly protests the teller.

"Where am I going? He asks me where I'm going! Where is the nearest commissariat of police?"

The outraged depositor hurries toward the street, but the teller hurries faster, whispers a call for M. Duvert to his clerk in passing, and heads off M. Stavisky just this side of the revolving door.

"Surely," he begs, "you will allow M. Duvert to explain. The bank doesn't want trouble."

It takes all the arts of persuasion of M. Duvert, a panting third on the scene, to negotiate M. Stavisky into the ladies' parlor, fortunately empty. In his extremity, M. Duvert blurts truths. He is the newest junior on the directorate. His sister married the son of the Chairman of the Board. This incident of the kited check, unfortunately, is bound up with another incident, a supper in a night club and a week-end visit to a — a — an aunt. As a fellow



for Arlette was something not calculated in the plans. Arlette was to have been a vehicle, simply, of fulfillment of the oracle. Her inspirational beauty was not needed. It was excessive. As a vehicle, she was turning out to be a runaway. It was Arlette who carried Stavisky, the greedy, hair-oiled, bounder son of an immigrant dentist, a parasang beyond his likely first ambition — probably nothing more lofty than a pocketful of cash, a case of champagne, and elbow room for a week or two of spree.

male, M. Stavisky will understand. And M. Duvert essays a sickly wink.

M. Stavisky allows himself to melt. He will be a good fellow. He will accept a refund of his 120,000 francs, cash; minus, of course, the sum of 120 francs, for which he holds a garnet pin. . . .

An angel of annunciation, M. Alexandre bursts into the apartment in the rue Edouard-Detaille. He has news which is more customarily received than imparted by the gentleman in the case.

"I have the honor to inform you, Madame," he bows low to Arlette, "that you are with child."

VIII

THERE IS a fatality about first debts. A man can grow rich, borrow and repay millions, build a railroad, and have a word as good as a government bond, but the ten spot he begged of a roommate at college will be a charge against his heirs.

Stavisky did not refill his father's gold drawer. There were more pressing things to be done with a surplus of 120,000 francs, now that he was in love. For he was in love. This passion

The love of Sascha for Arlette was authentic, for all that it violated a given rule — comforting to poor, honest folk who do not grow rich by crime — that a swindler's first victim is himself, that the devil gives him gold but exacts his capacities for the finer human gains as pledge for his soul. The rule holds good generally. Krueger's ladies began moving trunks from his penthouses all over the world an hour after news of the Swedish swindler's suicide.

But the devil made an exception in Stavisky's favor. He got all the loose gold in France and for bonus its most beautiful girl. The beauty of Arlette was (we may note that it is no longer) frightening. The cabinet of national emergency, to be specific in one instance, gotten together by Doumergue to steer France through the Stavisky Crisis, was frightened by that beauty. And all the way through, men handed over to Arlette what they had to give. Sascha gave her that first 120,000 francs. The gold drawer in the wall of Dr. Stavisky's operating room remained bare.

IX

M. FARALICQ, the plainclothesman from the 18th arrondissement commissariat, is

sprawled in Dr. Stavisky's operating chair. There is nothing wrong with M. Faralicq's teeth. They are set in the healthy jaws of a man who becomes in this affair the exponent of that placid tenacity which, in the absence of rare detective genius, is the best quality of police. M. Faralicq intends to arrest the thief of Dr. Stavisky's gold. He has finished examining the looted gold drawer.

"Your son —"

"Stop!" Dr. Stavisky has waited for this. "You can understand that I noticed all the perfectly obvious signs incriminating my son. You can also understand that I do not value the gold above honor. If I called you in at all, it is because my son is above suspicion. He is my son."

"I was only going to say," patiently protests M. Faralicq, "that if your son were here, he could —"

Dr. Stavisky attends to a sound in the vestibule. "Here he is," he triumphs over M. Faralicq.

Sascha has come to obtain information, not give it. How clever are the police? How close have they come to the truth, to him? How well is his luck holding? Has it still eight months and two weeks to run, as promised in Mme. Regina's prophecy? He must have obeyed his father's summons to this police confrontation in a mood of doubt close on despair. After all, the dullest police sleuth from the ranks has but to run down a few obvious leads into the places where stolen gold may be sold, and the case against the thief will be complete.

The danger here to Sascha is not a jail cell. Dr. Stavisky is a doting father. It may wither his soul to learn that his son is a thief, but, if Sascha is named, certainly he will quash the charge. But confession will take the police from Sascha's trail and conjure the peril that they will presently link Serge Stavisky, loser on the Bourse, with Georges Alexandre, winner by that piece of check-kiting legerdemain. Why not confess, then, and have it over with?

The answer is given by vanity. No. To be found out is unbearable. It is the thing that must not happen, to anyone. The dead man who keeps it is better off than the live one who yields his secret, whatever it is. It may be an innocent secret, like yours, or a guilty one, like Sascha Stavisky's, but it must be kept. The

identity a man offers to the world is the one by which he lives, and to lose it, either by discovery or defamation, is to be blotted out. Do not confuse here the criminal's *instinctive* horror of discovery with another matter, his *professional* aversion for it as for publishing his trade secret. Granted that Stavisky could think ahead into a planned career outside the law and see that he must not be fingerprinted at the start, for police-listed criminals are a sorry lot, defeated before they fight. But this practical consideration, keeping the record clean, still does not cover the case. It does not cover the murder. If arrest was all that Stavisky feared, a better move would have been the murder of Faralicq; the best, no murder at all.

And no arrest is to be made. Faralicq makes this twice clear. In the presence of the father, the detective gabbles densely about plans to trace an assistant who has left Dr. Stavisky's employ recently. On the sidewalk later, with Sascha alone, he removes Sascha's doubts of his perspicacity by informing the latter that he could be arrested at once.

"I've found that broker you used for fence," Faralicq tiredly explains, "but I know what would come of telling your father the truth. The last time I showed up a rich man's son I lost three grades of seniority. Now you either tell the old man all about it or sneak that gold back into the drawer. I give you two weeks. Au revoir, mon petit."

Faralicq is one of the victims, now, of French public opinion that Stavisky must have greased every official palm from start to finish, but the veteran stoutly maintains that his handling of the earliest recorded complaint against the master swindler was strictly within police routine. And it is true that police all over the world have a special technique for dealing with crime within family circles. It has been found inexpedient to proceed by letter of law against all wives who have visited the pockets of sleeping husbands, all children who have climbed to the shelf where mother keeps her sugar-bowl bank, all parents who have exploited wage-winning offspring and bought oil stocks with the loot.

Moreover Faralicq can challenge them all. Prefects, judges, ministers, primates, and presidents had Stavisky between their fingers and let him go. Faralicq is the only man in all

France who ever put handcuffs on those wrists, where they belonged. . . .

In Arlette's arms, in the flat in the rue Edouard-Detaille, Sascha is exulting. The prophecy is holding good. He worries over only one thing, speed. All the achievements of a lifetime must be crowded into the next 250 days. As the prophetess has said, at the end of nine months his child will live, and his luck will die. He must have his millions by then. He must hurry. What is the next move?

Arlette may well shrink away from her lover now. Behind those unmated eyes, the right one deformed by the pull of an atrophied nerve on the lower lid, the scheming brain which has played the creation of life as a card in a game of profit has just perceived that extinction of it is his next lead, if he would gamble for the grand slam. Arlette is being fondled by a murderer.

X

"**MERCY MURDER**" is a currently fashionable phrase. A young lady has cut her mother's throat in Denmark out of pure love. A North Carolinian sacrificed himself to an ideal and brained his wife. There have been several successive mercy murders in New Jersey, one or two in the Dakotas, and a particularly heart-warming one in Budapest, where a young bride helped her beloved out of a world in which the poor boy worked too hard for too little pay. A wave of tenderness sweeps the earth from pole to pole, and children bursting with filial piety, wives overflowing with self-abnegating fervor, and husbands burning with commiseration turn tear-filmed eyes away from the unbearable spectacle of the sufferings of their darlings and reach for the ax.

Considered as an arresting, alliterative phrase, fitting nicely into newspaper headlines and the mouth of defense counsel, mercy murder is merely the brand-newest jury dazzler, coming in the nick of time to supplant older and thinner court-room sophistries in the same key: "the unwritten law," "all went black," "split personality," "thrill killing," "honor slaying," and the other bravura variations on what remains a constant theme — the murderer's plaintive dislike to die.

However, considered for what it may add to understanding of the mystery of why men kill

men, mercy murder is a distinct contribution to the interpretive literature of crime, and authoritative, too, for it comes from the mouths of murderers. There is mercy in every murder. Pity invariably insures the killer's aim. The mercy murderers are guilty here only of a solecism. The pity welling up from the killer's soft heart is real pity, true, but pity for none but self. It may be that all but the most inadvertent murders are mercy murders in this sense.

Mercy murder is customarily practiced upon a person close to the murderer — a parent, a child, a mate. Now it would be nonsense to argue that it is the element of convenience alone which sets this rule, that the mercy murderer kills his wife simply because others are momentarily unattainable while she is there asleep beside him when he wakes in the merciful mood. Mercy murderers select as victims the next of kin; why? The answer is a distressing one, but is begged by the question. Your most intimate companion is the one who finds you out. Love is the greatest offender against privacy. The logical defense against the inquisitiveness of love is to kill.

Give all this a last twist and reach a paradox which covers the mercy-murder case entire: the mercy murderer murders his victim to spare him the imminent knowledge that his murderer is capable of murdering him.

Emmanuel Stavisky died in this happy ignorance of the potentialities of his beloved son.

Following the alarming warning from Faralicq, Sascha had spent several days in his old room at home. He was the prodigal returned. He was also the injured son and heir, honor impugned, patrimony looted, who had undertaken to supplement the half-hearted efforts of those stupid police and track the gold thief down. He adopted Faralicq's convenient fiction, the assistant who had resigned and disappeared. There is no evidence that Dr. Stavisky ever entertained the truth.

In the apartment of M. Georges Alexandre of the rue Edouard-Detaille, Arlette was lying ill. There had been too much commotion in too short a time for a girl so young. To be swept into a love affair, to collaborate on a dangerous swindle, to accept the venture of maternity, and now to lie alone expecting word that her protector is jailed: it is all too overwhelming for one hundred and sixteen pounds of young

female flesh not yet hardened in the brine of habitual criminality. The doctor warns her that this fretting will have one sure penalty.

"If you want to have your baby, Madame, you must have quiet in the country and be with your husband."

Sascha receives this medical news, and is stung by alarm. If the child fails in the womb, the thread of his luck is snapped. That is the oracle. His anxieties are as genuine as those of any normal young husband distracted by the surprising complications which develop out of an originally simple domestic intent. In fact, they *are* those anxieties, and it serves no purpose to try to separate into two emotions, a gambler's and a parent's, his single one of nascent paternal pride. The belief that his first-born is also his talisman but makes Arlette's burden doubly precious. This is one time when medical advice will be scrupulously obeyed.

A charming little country house at Marly-le-Roi is gotten as shelter for Arlette, with some difficulty and great expense. Immobilized in his father's house by the tactical necessity for watching in person for further signs of Faralicq, Sascha has to use go-betweens, and these must be admitted a few inches into the mystery. A malodorous individual named Max Smilovici, alien forager in those refuse cans of Paris iniquities, the music halls and the boxing clubs, a man who describes himself as a prize-fight promoter but can be induced to procure, have your enemy slugged, or sell a stolen watch, appears in the Stavisky *entourage*. Sascha hired him through Mme. Regina, the seeress, who has a little address book crammed with the names of these itinerant handy men of crime, small-fry professionals who pop up in every racket familiarly, like an opera chorus in all produc-

tions of a repertoire, and who turn state's evidence as regularly as the police nets hung for bigger fish bring these minnows in. Smilovici rents the country house, disengages M. Alexandre from his town lease, and installs Arlette in her new home, furnished, staffed from kitchen to sick room, and (high-light of the picture) Mme. Regina as a house-guest who moves in bag and baggage, including her greasy ritual robes and the crystal-gazing globe mounted on purple velvet.

For all this Smilovici exacts a thumping commission. He is certain that he has hooked an important rich man indulging an extra-matrimonial fantasy, and that is always good pay. Sascha is more than ever glad that he did not expend that 120,000-franc profit from the prestidigitated check refilling his father's gold drawer.

So far, so good. One half the medical prescription is filled. Arlette is bedded down in the country. The other half, attendance at her side, is more difficult for Sascha to fill. The dilemma takes form. It is geographical. Sascha cannot be here and also there.

The solution is a forced one. A message from Marly is that Arlette has had a fainting spell. Sascha has to cut his Gordian knot and go to her. But he cannot bear to leave his father behind.

A telegram is sent to the old man, reaching him at a mid-week early in June, 1926. It bids him spend the following week-end with his son in Marly-le-Roi. As the necessity for concealing the legal identity of M. Alexandre from Dr. Stavisky will be eliminated by Saturday noon, the father is told to ask for his son in Marly by the alias. In a state of foggy amazement, Dr. Stavisky sets out on his last journey.



Concluded Next Month

ALL VETERANS ARE NOT PARASITES

BY CHARLES M. KINSOLVING

IN THE dining room of a highly respected suburban resident of one of our large American cities, a group of well-groomed, purposeful-looking scions of the upper social crust was engaged in an after-dinner exchange of generalities.

The host was taking orders for liqueurs while two immaculate servants passed the *demi-tasse* to those around the dinner table. It might be said that this group represented a cross-section of the best element in American professional, financial, and commercial life.

The conversation was perfunctory until one of the guests, more volubly inclined than his fellows, put down his liqueur glass and announced that a certain individual, having secured the backing of several veterans' organizations in the community, was going to run for Congress. The information provoked immediate denunciation of the candidate from nearly all present, together with some cognac-inspired condemnation of the veterans' "racket" and of veterans' organizations in general.

At the right of the place recently vacated by the hostess was a lean, slim-hipped, out-of-town guest with some claim to distinction as a polo player, explorer, and welfare worker. As a newcomer in the group, he had listened alertly but cynically to the excoriation going on around him. When the vituperation had died down, he leaned forward and said: "I should like to ask you gentlemen a few questions. How many of us here are veterans?" The host replied that to his certain knowledge every man present had served in the armed forces of the United States during the World War, that all had been volunteers, that practically all had seen action, and that a good proportion had been promoted during service or cited for conspicuous gallantry in action.

"Fine," said the out-of-town guest, "Just

what I thought. Now, how many of you are members of a service organization? Let's take each one around the table. Do you belong to the Legion or the Veterans of Foreign Wars or the American Veterans' Association or any other nationally influential ex-service men's unit?" The answer was "No" from all but two out of the nine in the group. Two of them still belonged to their Legion Posts but never went to the meetings. Some of the others had belonged to some service unit or other but had dropped out.

"Just what I thought," repeated the out-of-town guest. "We have all been sitting here grousing and cursing the veterans' groups without having the slightest idea of what is going on in these organizations except what we read in the newspapers. We don't know a thing about the demonstrations put up by some Legionnaires in Legion meetings against the unwarranted demands of the less intelligent elements in their units. We don't realize that there are thousands of ex-service men, with the same ideas of justice as our own, still fighting in these veterans' organizations to educate the rank and file to a realization of their just deserts — but without our support.

"We, like hundreds of others of our own class, comfortably ensconce ourselves at the hospitable board of our friend here or of some equally amiable host and damn the Legion and damn the V.F.W. and damn the radical elements in the veterans' units and not a finger do we lift to bring these patriotically conceived organizations back to a proper conception of true patriotism. Nor do we, as veterans, organize against a trend which we know will ultimately place service to the nation in time of conflict on the same mercenary plane as that of King George III's Hessians.

"Now, gentlemen," he concluded, "whose fault is it?"

II

THERE ARE perhaps more than 2,000,000 ex-service men in the United States who belong to no nationally known veterans' organization. This number embraces thousands with splendid war records, who, accustomed as they are to the better things of life, refuse to tarnish their reputations by identifying themselves with any veterans' movement for fear someone may think that they are emphasizing the importance of their war records or attribute their activities in veterans' affairs to some political or self-seeking motive.

Like Achilles sulking in his tent, they grieve over the way events have shaped themselves but prove to astute observers that what they would have their fellow citizens believe is innate modesty is, in reality, complacent self-satisfaction and prevents them from hobnobbing with the less distinguished veterans in their respective communities.

To these aloof ex-warriors, every good deed accomplished by a veterans' unit and every truly unselfish and patriotic resolution passed is nothing more than another Trojan horse camouflaging some lurking demand for bigger and greater gratuities and pensions; but, generally speaking, this vicious indictment is unwarranted.

The types of men described above could be the leaders of thought in the veterans' units, if they would only assume the leadership which tradition, heredity, and education has bequeathed them. They represent an element in the American intellectual scale which knows the difference between that which is honest and straightforward and that which is corrupt and graft-laden. Their fathers volunteered to fight in the Spanish-American War. Their grandfathers served on either one side or the other in the travail of '61-'65. Their forbears made this their country in the late 1770's. And, now that these twentieth-century patriots are faced with the expansion of one of the most insidious rackets in the history of the world, they sit back in their smug, well-fed, country-club complacency and "let George do it." Or, worse still, attempt to fight the racket from a distance, without soiling their social distinction in the community by too much shoulder-rubbing with *boi polloi*.

III

FOR TWO years the writer has been studying the psychology of the veteran and of the veterans' organizations, through personal contact with Legion posts, leaders in the V.F.W., executives in the D.A.V. Association, and rehabilitation officers of the Veterans' Bureau, to say nothing of visits to the men still in the hospitals or those recently admitted to veterans' clinics through the liberalization of the veterans' laws. Those who have not studied the issues involved fail to take cognizance of the bitterness and prejudice which have arisen between the left and right wings in veterans' ranks during the past three or four years.

How does dishonest legislation, opening the way to undeserved gratuities to veterans who suffered no incapacity as the result of war service, get on the federal statute books? Here is one instance of the way it happens. Let us suppose that the legislative department of some veterans' organization, with headquarters in Washington, introduces a bill providing a pension for the widows of all men who ever wore the uniform in the service of the United States. Suppose that the bill, when introduced into Congress, is opposed by a representative from some constituency boasting a service-organization unit of well known probity and integrity. When opposition is shown to the bill by this representative, the local commander of the service organization receives a telegram from his superior in the state organization advising him that his representative is opposing the widows' bill.

The local commander is an upstanding, honest, generous citizen, who has been chosen to lead his local unit by virtue of his respected position in his community. What is his reaction when he receives a telegram informing him that the man he helped to elect is opposing his organization's bill? He sees red. He doesn't know that it is his own widow that he is providing for. He hasn't even seen the law. If he has seen it, he hasn't had time to read it. He has been too busy looking after his own business and the wants of less fortunate members of his own community. So what does he do?

With righteous indignation and patriotic ardor, he calls a meeting of his organization and bombards the congressman with threats of los-

ing his seat at the next election. The deluge of telegrams from veterans, wives, sons, daughters, sons-in-law, and daughters-in-law of veterans swamp the poor man. He knows the bill is wrong. He knows the law will be a bad law and that it will lead to countless abuses. But what can he do? Wait patiently until the opposition expresses itself? He does; and no opposition registers a protest. Ergo, he votes for the bill.

This system is adopted by the legislative leaders of the service organizations all over the country. Other congressmen fare likewise. The majority of the veterans sending telegrams or abusive letters haven't the faintest idea what it is all about. It's the machine. It has been going on for years and it will go on for years more, unless the right-thinking veterans, both in and out of the service organizations, take a hand and put an end to it.

Not that this pressure should excuse the congressman for voting for a measure he knows to be iniquitous. If he is thinking only of votes, he shouldn't be representing his constituency. If he is conscientiously against the bill, he should cast his vote accordingly. If he does not understand the provisions of the bill, he should refrain from voting.

IV

IT MUST be borne in mind that not only the rank and file of veterans but, in a great many cases, those leading the component parts of veterans' organizations have not the slightest comprehension of veterans' legislation as a subject. They are persuaded by politicians that, because they wore the uniform for a short space of time and subjected themselves to military training (either voluntarily or under compulsion), the country owes them a living.

Few of the ex-service men who could do so much in influencing the rank and file of veterans have the slightest knowledge of the reverence with which the latter regard their service units. In hundreds of towns throughout the United States the veterans' post is the outstanding influence in the community. Tens of thousands of veterans cannot afford to belong to golf clubs, lunch clubs, and the like, and their entire social, political, and, indeed, their spiritual life is bound up in loyalty to the local post. Legion-meeting night is an event in the lives of these men which is seldom missed. It is the one

night when they are absolutely free from home ties and other charges on their time and can feel in themselves a certain elevation above the commonplace. Attendance at these meetings generally includes the principal newspaper editors, political leaders, doctors, and, almost invariably, the chief clergymen.

Now this is what happens on meeting night in the posts of a great many service organizations. The Chairman, who has a big deal on the next day, leaves early, so that he will be on the alert in the morning. The clergymen, knowing that the boys feel a slight strain in their presence, diplomatically make their exit at about ten o'clock. The doctor is called out on a case. The newspaper men withdraw to get out the first edition.

Someone passes around a hip flask. Two or three of the boys remember the hell they went through at Camp Taylor, Fort Sill, or Fort Leavenworth. Several others have lost their jobs. Patriotism is forgotten, the Constitution is forgotten, the precepts set forth by the founders of the organization are forgotten — and then come the resolutions!

The news that such and such a post passed such and such a resolution flashes from unit to unit. It is played up in the press. It is commented on editorially. The better elements attempt to obtain a reconsideration. Frustrated, they give up and resign. And, all the while, those who should assume political leadership in these units are sipping coffee and liqueurs in pleasant surroundings and allowing a valuable heritage to fall into the hands of what they are pleased to think of as the rabble. Hundreds of ex-service men, with every qualification for leadership, refuse to enter the lists in behalf of conservative control because the corporations they work for look askance at such activities. A well-known southern banker was recently heard to remark: "When an otherwise able executive begins to interest himself in molding public opinion, it's about time to begin calling his loans."

What is known of the earnest efforts of true patriots in the Legion to stop the pro-bonus activity which emanated from the veterans who were being daily "laid off" — men with no understanding of the terms "interest," "adjusted compensation," "commutation of quarters?"

Does anyone recall the efforts of such Legion leaders as John McCall of Tennessee, John Dwight Sullivan of New York, or Donald Hobart of Bronxville, toward keeping the Legion on the right track? Or the leadership of the Willard Straight, Anthony Wayne, and Longmeadow Posts? Or the courage of Legion men like Broon of California, Williams of Maryland, or Morris of Florida? Even today, vilifiers of the veterans' "racket" forget National Commander Louis Johnson's four-point program at last year's Legion convention. There are thousands of straight shooters still struggling to hold the uncertain element in check. It is a losing fight but it shouldn't be.

Not long ago an "anti-bonus" broadcast was to be made by a veteran over a radio hook-up. The broadcast was to commence at nine o'clock. The local veterans' unit was to meet at eight-thirty. The commander of the unit had been given an advance copy of the talk and had found nothing objectionable in the presentation. But when the meeting convened, a resolution was offered that the entire gathering disband to raid the radio station and prevent the veteran from making his presentation, in spite of the fact that he had a contract for his time on the air.

With astute parliamentarianism the commander listened to the debate, gave his own views, dragged the debate on, and, at about nine o'clock, recommended that the entire matter be taken up with unfinished business. This meant that the issue could not come up at the meeting until after the broadcast had been completed. It was ticklish work. Had the rank and file had their way, considerable discredit would have been brought on the service unit. The commander knew it. This is just one of many such situations with which these post commanders have to deal.

V

HUNDREDS of Legionnaires have written the headquarters of the newly formed American Veterans' Association, stating their intention of resigning from the Legion and joining

the new group. The Membership Committee of the American Veterans' Association in every case has replied: "Stay in the Legion and purge from within — join us for a nominal fee and help us purge from without."

The whole issue is to-day so fraught with misunderstanding that only the most intelligent veterans can unravel the knotted skein. In an epoch when true statesmanship is to be found in only a few national leaders, politicians are making hay out of the muddle. With the organization of the National Economy League, which was founded, backed, and developed by veterans with the finest of service records, the effort at reform lost much of its strength and effectiveness, because of the quick political reaction against the taxpayer.

Whether or not the statistics released by the League were correct or in error, the fact that the real reformers in the League were veterans themselves — who not only did much of the actual fighting during the war but are now paying for the privilege of having fought — these things were not taken into consideration in the politicians' leering reflection on the taxpayer.

And who, if not the taxpayer, has a right to kick about unjust taxation? Legion Posts joined in the fight everywhere. It was pointed out that there was a distinction between a war-disabled veteran and a disabled war veteran, but most efforts to explain this in public were and are being howled down. Congressmen and senators have taught the rank and file the battle cry of "gimme — gimme — gimme," without invoking this pregnant distinction. There is no issue before the public to-day so replete with possibilities for political corruption.

Every patriotic veteran should join some service organization and take an interest in its activities. Disgruntled Legionnaires should stay in the Legion and fight. Otherwise, their United States will never again be able to raise a defensive citizens' army, in the event of foreign aggression, without guaranteeing to the nation's defenders gratuities whose payment will strangle the liberty for which they and their forefathers fought.

In an early issue:
"We Fight Communists and Bandits,"
by Madame Chiang Kai-Shek

THE PSYCHIC SIDE OF SEX

BY ERNEST R. GROVES

AN EXPERIENCED gynecologist, speaking on the problems of early marriage adjustment, recently said: "If at the end of six months the man and woman are leading a satisfactory sex life, or anything approaching it even after a year, they are lucky."

From his audience this assertion brought no emotional protest, for the men and women realized how common it is for difficulties to hamper or defeat happy sex adjustment in marriage. It happened that he was speaking in a southern city. Suppose his audience had been made up of a different type of person: for example, let us say Negro men and women existing on a subsistence plane of living. To them such a statement, if intelligible at all, would have seemed ridiculous. They know from experience what it means to have to deal with problems that arise from sex, but rarely indeed is sexual adjustment itself a problem to them.

We do not need to go to savage society to find people whose sex appetite is as simple and direct as their hunger for food. We need only to find men and women living near the primitive level of economic and cultural existence. The sex tension of which we hear so much, and rightly, because of its effects upon both the single and the married, is not the result, except in extraordinarily few cases, of any biological unfitness of the body to achieve sex adjustment. The sex problems that trouble modern men and women are not biological in character. Civilization has not taken away physical passion any more than the evolution of cooking has spoiled our taste for food. The facts are the opposite. The evidence seems conclusive that the modern male and female have keener sex sensitivity than primitive men and women. From a strictly body point of view most of them are also more highly sexed.

Then what is making trouble in sex experience? In a word, civilization itself. In part this has been the result of holding to superstitions regarding sex, rather than gaining knowledge; of attempting unwholesome, ascetic life programs — a product of fear of the sex impulse; and, more recently and importantly, of failing to study normal sex life or to use the facts already known to help people carry on with skill the practices of marriage.

In dealing with the common forms of sexual maladjustment much progress has been made of late, but, the more these are lessened by rational preparation and maturer emotional attitudes, the clearer it becomes that no small part of the modern problems of sex is inherent in civilization itself. To ignore this and to attempt a solution of the sex needs of modern men and women by thinking of them as coming from the same impulses as those of people living on the primitive level is adolescent. It means being misled by a fictitious simplicity. Men and women in the modern world do not live on the primitive level. They cannot remain primitive in their sex life and modern in other aspects of their life. Sex cannot be isolated from the effects of a highly developed civilization, and there is no reason for anyone wishing it so. The primitive has little that the person making intelligent use of present human resources can rightly envy. His happy-go-lucky, let-the-morrow-take-care-of-itself attitude we sometimes covet; but we never seriously seek it at the price he has to pay for it. We have no desire to return to the cloud of superstition in which the primitive moves and has his being. It is folly for us to conceive of his apparently easy-going sex life as an ideal that we should pursue in order to escape from the perplexities that now trouble modern society because some are born males and some females.

There are artificial problems that we have

put upon ourselves by our failure to think and to act rationally in the realm of sex, but this does not mean that we should try to get back to lower stages of sex culture. On the contrary, our happiness, unlike that of primitive men and women, must be achieved by maturing our emotions, increasing our information, and using our best knowledge in dealing with the various problems that arise in all human careers when we find ourselves, as individuals or as members of society, face to face with an expression of the sex impulse. Even the southern Negro, as he progresses remarkably in standards of living, is rapidly growing away from the simple sex life that has made his physical adjustment easy.

We want not mere sex happiness but life happiness. When we seek sex satisfaction we at least need to know what it involves. We must deal with sex in its present large meaning — not with an elementary type of sex adjustment. When we look to see what has been done to sex by civilization, we find that it has been refined, that the demands that men and women make of it have increased, and that it has become socially significant in a way not dreamed of in primitive society. Only by digging out the consequences of each of these changes can we have hope of rationally handling the problems of sex in the modern world.

II

MUCH HAS happened to man in the millions of years that he has lived on the earth, and sex registers, as does every other part of human life, the effects of this long evolution. It would be strange to find that in spite of the other changes that have occurred in the feeling and thinking of men and women nothing of importance had happened to sex. To assume that this is possible is to misunderstand the composition of the human sex life. Sex as we know it is not a mere physiological hunger, not even a mere elaboration of a special sensory apparatus. Sex has become for the human essentially a brain experience. This means more than that the brain registers stimulations that bring forth in consciousness a unique type of pleasure. In addition to this the stimulation that is carried over the nervous pathway to its receiving station in the brain is also brought into contact with other brain cells that con-

tribute their part, helpfully or adversely, to the total experience that we call sex satisfaction.

This complexity of nervous organization that, whether we like it or not, belongs to the normal man and woman, provides opportunity for an enrichment of sex through emotional attitudes and the fusion of ideas gathered from memory and projected by imagination. This extension of the sex appetite has been greater and emotionally deeper than anything that has taken place in the elaboration of hunger for food, but in both appetites we see the results of this process of refinement. Normally no human being can eat like an animal. Our sex satisfactions are even more distant from those of the animal. It is sometimes said that the instincts handle the mating problem better than we humans do. It is easy to see how many problems the animal escapes, but this is only because of the simplicity of its sex life. In the stretches of human evolution illustrated not only by differences between peoples on higher and lower cultural levels but also by individuals who, living at the same time and place, differ greatly in sensitivity and in the content of their life, there is great variation in the kind of sex experience required to bring satisfaction. This cannot be ignored by any program that seeks greater sex happiness for men and women.

Courtship is an illustration of sex difference between people. Ordinarily in primitive society we find nothing that resembles the intense, explorative, experimental youth relationship which we call courtship. It is one of our latest cultural achievements. It is not necessary to mating. Marriage could even be put once again upon a business basis, and a man could buy his wife as one buys cattle — a practice not uncommon in earlier stages of human culture. But what young man or woman would welcome this change? It could come only at the cost of changing entirely the significance of the wife to the man, and in the end this would be as great a loss to him as to her.

Sex also could be made so commonplace that any casual meeting of man and woman would quickly bring forth in both expressions of sex hunger that would be immediately satisfied as a matter of course, but such freedom in sex relations cannot exist and at the same time the explorative uncertainties, tender responses, and gradual commitment of normal modern

courtship. Man and woman could see in their meeting an immediate opportunity for a frank recognition of sex desire and a happy chance to satisfy it, but if this became the one purpose of their association, that association could not be something else.

Sex cannot be made commonplace, a mere relief of body hunger, and still flower in the idealism that appears in modern love. "Well," one may ask, "what more do we want of sex than body satisfaction?" We want much more, because emotional values have been added to sex and have come to have for most of us a tremendous importance.

Between the most primitive levels of sex achievement and our present modern demands there have been attempts at compromise. Prostitution is an illustration. Whatever criticism one may make of this solution of the problem, it at least recognized that there were two orders of sex. The ordinary prostitute was expected to provide only a meager body satisfaction. This was so impersonal and so devoid of emotional meaning as to be described by the specialist as essentially the same thing as masturbation. Prostitution made trouble for the male because it gave him a poverty type of sex experience that made him an ineffective husband. It failed for the woman because it led her to debase sex and to prove her superiority in cases not a few by refusing to admit to herself the existence of her biological passion. Often she was a child bearer but not a sex partner. In the thinking and feeling of both the husband and the wife there was a cleavage between sex and reproduction that tended to make the sex impulse a possession of a lower (socially regarded) type of woman.

III

affection
THE plus that has been added to wholesome sex experience we now know as affection, in contrast with mere passion. This has not lessened physical sex but has expanded it, by offering it an emotional expression absolutely denied to sex pleasure on the primitive level. This composite human drive is now for most of us the supreme craving. The mere seeking of physical sex cannot satisfy the modern, mature person. Any attempt to solve the sex problem as if it were a mere physiological hunger antagonizes this larger desire, and a greater satis-

faction is thereby exchanged for a smaller.

James Boyd illustrates this in *Marching On*. Harry Horniblow, who has been chasing women since puberty, has had too many to love any one of them. He calls love "damn foolishness" and then confesses that he envies his comrade who can love.

It is true that the refinement and the extension of sex experience on the human level, made possible by the large place its psychic aspects have come to have, is the explanation of many of the sex maladjustments that occur between husbands and wives. This does not mean, however, that our effort should be to subtract from sex these mental characteristics it has acquired. Not only is this impossible; to attempt it would mean adding more difficulties to those already existing. The trouble is not that sex has come to mean so much but that there has been failure to build the attitudes necessary to mature, to socialize, and to satisfy the sex impulse.

Some progress has been made; and we were never so far away from the taboos that have rendered futile any serious attempt to help men and women achieve normal sex life. The strangle hold of superstition has been broken, the false words of morbid asceticism are no longer heeded, but little has yet been done to distribute the information now available to young people facing marriage, so as to give them a fair chance to understand themselves sexually.

Only of late have we become fact-facing enough to make even a slight beginning in the investigation of the normal sex drive and needs of men and women. We are moving away from the unfortunate first start of science in the field of sex, which led to the exploring of the abnormal expressions of those sexually or mentally unsound. Evidence of this backwardness in the study of sex is the fact that even in our foremost medical schools only recently has there been any attention given to the normal sex life of men and women and its relation to their health.

Science at last has broken into this field so long fenced by the strongest of taboos, and it is certain to do here what it has done everywhere else, as, patiently, without bias, it seeks the facts that men and women need to know in order to build a program of behavior that

will conserve the welfare of both the individual and society. This means getting knowledge that at present does not exist and information particularly hard to gain. Taking into account the difficulties, it is surprising that so much has been accomplished during the last ten years. The sex career of the individual is so intimately related to the endocrine symphony of the body, which is moving rapidly toward a commanding position in the study of disease, that it now appears an impossibility for preventive medicine ever again to ignore sex as it once did.

Whatever the sex code of the future, it is certain to be based upon the facts that science gains, and there is no reason at present to suppose that it will be less exacting in its demands than that of the past. It will surely emphasize the necessity of maturity, justice, and loyalty in the sex practices of both men and women.

Meanwhile our failure to deal rationally with the psychic aspects of sex is proving an intolerable burden. Frigidity of women, impotence of men, painful and unsatisfying marital relations, and morbid obsessions and mental breakdown in a great variety of forms are at least related closely to the unintelligent, immature sex careers. In many cases sex maladjustment is the chief cause of the difficulty. But situations that we once took for granted through ignorance are no longer being tolerated by those who realize the needlessness of this form of human suffering.

IV

It is not to be expected that science, with its growing insistence that it take over its proper obligations in the sex sphere, will be content with efforts merely to eliminate these disastrous consequences of psychic sex immaturity. There is certain to come also the persistent drive for some wholesome sex ideas. This means continuing on a still higher level that growth in the meaning of sex adjustment which already has led to the coming of love and the building of the ideal which makes sex fully satisfying only within this relationship of mutual responsibility and complete commitment of man and woman. There is every reason to believe that sex satisfaction outside of such a relationship will be looked upon in the

future as something inferior and disappointing.

The problem of sex has never been that of individuals merely. Every society that has existed has had, so far as present evidence shows, a realization that there are other interests at stake than those of the particular man or woman. Although this attitude has been influenced at times by the likelihood of pregnancy, it has never been exclusively this consideration that has led to the limitations, the regulations in all sorts of ways of the human sex impulse.

In savage tribes on the lowest cultural levels there has rarely been anything like the freedom that the traveler, who sees everything in contrast with his own civilization, at first supposes. Sex always has had and apparently always will have too much social dynamite gathered about it to be a strictly private affair. The taboos of the past cannot return, but this is not because they were an unwarranted interference of the group nor because they were always lacking in intelligent purpose. When the taboos enforced sound public policy they were of the nature of primitive law. They are no longer needed, for we can now handle sex problems more intelligently.

It may seem strange to some readers to find Lenin rebuking those of his followers who insisted that the satisfaction of passion was of no greater moment than seeking a glass of water when thirsty and declaring that this theory, which had driven some of his young people crazy, is impossible in any society. Yet here is what he said:

Of course thirst cries out to be quenched. But will a normal person under normal conditions lie down in the dirt on the road and drink from a puddle? Or even a glass with a rim greasy from many lips? But most important of all is the social aspect. Drinking water really is an individual concern. Love involves two, and a third, a new life, may come into being. That implies an interest on the part of society, a duty to the community.

If human sex relations carried only physical risks, safeguards against them could be provided. But it is their psychic and social complexities that will make the civilization of the future as wary of the teaching of the libertine as of that of the ascetic. For the passing of the taboo promises not leisure but intelligent sex discipline.

GREEN WORLD

BY JOSEPH AUSLANDER

Let Archimedes estimate
Gideon's or Gath's estate,
Babel's Tower, Solomon's Temple,
Width of gateway, height of gate
For example:
These he can elucidate,
These are simple.

But the twist the heart receives
From the clashing of the leaves
On wet midsummer eves
Who can measure?
Or the wrench the gulls impart,
Or blue herons when they clang across the heart?
Or the pleasure
Even the dullest pulse can get
From the grass when it is splashed with ghostly treasure
Webbed and wet?
Or from dazzled sun-drenched thieves
Roaring home
Flushed with the florid loot of many a bleeding honeycomb?

Let Macedon be moody as he will;
I am content with water and a hill
In light or shadow;
I am content with crickets in a meadow
Under a quiet sky,
Hearing their cool guitar strings tinkle,
Watching the butterfly
Bluer than bluest periwinkle
Twinkle
And pass me by.

Let Nero bite his nails; I am content
To smell the creeping scent
Of nightfall and cold dewfall on the land;
I am well pleased to put my hand
Upon a moon-brushed leaf, upon leaf-mold
That still retain
Stamped in the grain
The superscription of the summer's gold.

I have swung back full circle, and I stand
Where first I stood
When song and the green world ran riot in my blood,
And I believed in Keats and Samarkand,
And I was not afraid
Of weaving verses out of wind and rain
And mist and birds and early morning
And spiders gripping dew-soaked trellises
With freshly jewelled fingers,
And I was not afraid
Of music made
By sentimental singers
For the heart's brief adorning.

I made my songs of snails and meteors and trees —
I have returned to these
As might a king who has mislaid
His jewels, crown and signet ring,
For a long winter, and then one night in spring
Finds them where he had left them and is glad;
Or as a jewel smouldering
Against a king's breast
Under the dust and rain and ruin of centuries
Bursts into flame
In the abrupt sun — though the king
Is nothing but a name,
Or else a nameless thing
At rest.



THE FETISHES WE WORSHIP

BY ERNEST SEEMAN

I CUT across a bare, unhedged yard down by the railroad tracks. Some children were playing there. "Hey, mister, git off our game, will ya?" She was the tallest of the group, tousle-headed, about ten years old. Her arms were fiercely akimbo, and displeasure was written large upon her grimy face. I apologized and stepped into the road. "You better learn somethin' about playin' hopscotch, you big pa-looka . . ." came over my shoulder. "Yeah!" the others tittered.

Down the road a piece, their point of view struck me clearly. I had blundered into an absorbing childish game. They had stick marks drawn on the ground, and to them these were something important. They were the form and the rules of their game, inherited from centuries of other children. Busy with their ritual, to them I had been an intruding barbarian, an eraser of custom, of traditional metes and bounds.

There are grown-up games like that, games in which the childish rites are as unchangeable as the laws of the Medes and Persians, games in which the curious, antiquated rules are accorded as much reverence as the seating etiquette at a congressional dinner party. It began long ago, long before the Pharaohs. It began in the dawn of history, began with the priesthood having a monopoly — by priest-made rule — of matchmaking; continued with cannibalism; leaped to medieval Europe, with its shocking right-of-the-first-night, in which the lord of the manor, rather than the husband, claimed the bride; and had its finest bloom in the rule-of-the-game initiated by the Hapsburgs when they claimed near relationship with the Almighty, in the interest of deriving a perpetual income from an overawed populace. In 1632 Galileo ran counter to the rigid rules governing scientific thought of that period, and was dungeoned for blasphemy;

while in colonial Salem a denial of witchcraft was a thing as heretical as a defense of Sunday golf in 1880.

Less than a century ago our Supreme Court ruled that the black man had no mind, that his mental endowment was on a par with that of the dumb beasts he tended. Yet of what value is this judicial decision when opposed by the facts: the college founded by the slave, Booker Washington; the findings of that chemical wizard, Professor George Carver; the inventions of E. J. Matzeliger; and the fact that the original blueprints of the telephone came from the hands of a black man, Lewis H. Latimer.

It is a good thing that the rules of the game change, that they keep changing ever so often. When a rule works for the happiness of only a few and for the misery of the many, is it not time that it was changed?

II

THERE ARE a lot of silly fetishes holding us back now. Queer, senseless rules laid down by forgotten generations of the haughty and the ignorant. They are so much dead weight. They are like so many corpses. They are of no more value in these times than bear claws or wampum. Nobody can give any real reason for carrying them along. Yet we build our thinking around them. Our institutions are honeycombed with their faulty wisdom. Let us look a few of these hand-me-downs squarely in the face and see what a lot of silly nonsense they really are.

We still hold it to be a logical and civilized arrangement that the lion's share of wealth created by the toil and luck of one generation shall descend to the dolts and wastrels of the next. Leading business men, divines, and educators defend this plan as one of wisdom and "democracy." And so society goes on

bestowing immense and wholly unearned fortunes upon a few gilded youths concerned primarily with speed machines and the physical lusts. That these few may have unstinted leisure and the means for indulging their moronic follies, thousands of purposeful and creative people must grind in the treadmill of their profit machines, must produce for them more and more goods and gold. And then, by this same time-honored rule, the most precious members of the human race — its geniuses — are denied the bare leisure to ply their talents, are denied the bare security in which to weave for the enrichment of millions the vast and magical spinnings of their minds.

Consider also, if you will, this further curious paradox of our economic system. In this liberty-loving republic of the twentieth century it is, by the hallowed rule of dog-eat-dog, nothing unusual that the basic necessities of its one hundred and thirty-five million citizens should be controlled by a minority of speculators and capitalists hardly larger than the Hapsburg family in its heyday. Complacently we invite these gallant Dick Turpins to throttle society at its main arteries by their private monopoly of the Machine, transportation and foodstuffs, the press, mineral and chemical resources, and the money supply.

That the rules of topsy-turvy by which we steer will call down the ridicule of posterity is not to be doubted. Surely the veriest kindergarten of 2034 will be diverted by the spectacle of our "overproduction" bonfires of grain and other precious fruits of the field, our destruction of food by shiploads, while hordes of destitute citizens take to the woods and the road to keep from starving, all in order that the sacred fetish of Profit may be honored, that a handful of well-fed people may have no red lines in their ledgers.

We twit that old Iclander, King Canute, for commanding the tide to cease encroaching on his scanty shores. And yet we, a thousand years wiser, would forbid the sun's and the soil's begetting foodstuffs and wearing materials. It is a practical way, say we, to feed the hungry and clothe the ragged!

III

LET US examine the curious ritual that is our religion. Professing to believe the socialistic

teachings of a certain Nazarene fisherman, we have created upon his axioms of mercy a code of violence that would do justice to the blood-thirstiest devils of hell. Prating about the brotherhood of man, we build machines for slaughtering whole cities of our fellows. Cunningly we devise instruments for tearing the hearts and guts out of their pitiful carcasses. These activities are blessed from our pulpits and fomented by our press. Our foremost Christian citizens manufacture cannon and gunpowder. Bishops of the church and foundations for indigent ministers mumble something about putting our trust in heaven — and invest their savings in the shares of machine-gun companies. According to this curious rule we would usher in the era of good will to man by a military parade, heavy artillery, dead and dying, orphans and widows. And if the Prince of Peace were suddenly to reappear in our muddled midst there is scarcely any doubt that we would hang him to a telegraph pole before night for his revolutionary doctrines.

These savage fetishes that overrun our religion also extend their stifling tendrils to education. Consider, for example, our recent ostrich-like philosophy of closing down the schoolhouses. By skimping on the enlightenment of our children for a year, we save \$300,000,000 to put into new war machines for murdering the next generation of children in other lands. Quite a neat saving — assuming the value of the next generation to be 0 and figuring by the same insane calculus of blood and fear that was good mathematics in the Age of the Bushmen.

Some of the rules of our higher education, as practiced in our most liberal and cosmopolitan universities, are centuries out of step with modern life. Recently a young man came up for an advanced degree in one of these institutions. He had written a thoughtful thesis. He had been at it two years. He was quizzed on this and that. Then a learned professor, himself distinguished by diplomas from many universities, made a great to-do over a pair of commas, which, he claimed, were a little south by southeast of where such-and-such an authority had said they were supposed to lie. He argued the matter seriously, earnestly, eloquently for the better part of an hour. What that young man stepping out into the world

thought of that world's social set-up, what were his ideals, his hopes for serving his fellow beings, how he would earn his bread and butter were never mentioned. It was all very like the sages out of Gulliver's Travels debating on flyspecks — this ancient, monastic fetish of education, whereby childish hairsplitting still passes for wisdom.

An obscure verse from St. Matthew to the effect that there shall be "wars and rumors of wars" has for years furnished a stock reason for our statesmen wagging their sage heads at the poet's impractical dream of a world parliament. Yet that law-and-order institution the day after to-morrow will be as real as radio or television. Its legislative chambers, its president, its international navy, will be the heart of the Federated States of the World, and our grandchildren will hold it as indispensable to civilization as the sheriff was to the mining town or the corner policeman is to us.

IV

FUTURE historians will doubtless comment on our remarkable uses of advertising. First we maintain, at great public expense, institutions for the care of ailing, drug-addicted, and mentally unbalanced persons. At the same time we think it not at all strange to devote the public press, billboards, and radio wholeheartedly to the making of fresh hordes of physical and mental wrecks. The makers of drugged and habit-forming drinks, of foods preserved with poisons, of useless or dangerous depressant nostrums we look upon as public benefactors. We allow them to gag the press, buy off adverse legislation, and, as trustees of educational institutions, even to discharge from our public schools and universities the chemist or thinker who dares speak against their antisocial tactics. In fact we delight to have them inform the credulous — children as well as adults — that their wares are wholesome and conducive to health and happiness. Without a qualm we stupidly dedicate our last powerful implement of propaganda to their exploiting of the ignorant and the sick, so that

they may provide us with an ever-increasing supply of defectives to tax anew the public energies and exchequer.

In crime, our rules of the game are as logical as a road that ends in a bog. We begin by denying a large section of our youth decent living conditions in which to develop stamina — mental, moral, or physical. To this youth we deny bodily nourishment and a wholesome place to play. We deprive it of guidance by seeing to it that its mothers are kept toiling long hours in factory and sweatshop. Then, when a young citizen oversteps a rule of conventional behavior, we lock him up in the company of hardened criminals. Under their sinister influence he learns to hate the unfair rules of the game that society has made for him even before his birth. He also learns to hate the fellow man, individually and in classes, who enjoys a more fortunate lot. In this dangerous frame of mind we turn him loose like a hungry wolf on the community. Naturally his reinforced hatred of organized society soon comes out in graver offenses. He is utterly reckless now of the property or life of others, aided by the malignant ease with which he can secure lethal weapons which give him a fictitious sense of power. So he snatches without compunction at either property or life, and at this point we clap the unfortunate into prison for a long term of years or for life. And here is where the absurdity of the ancient procedure is exposed. In prison, this man-who-never-had-a-chance costs the public purse as much as if he had been sentenced for the same length of time to a hospital bed. If the terrific sum we pay to keep undeveloped, thwarted men behind bars were only applied to their nurture and training in youth and to their economic and psychic protection in maturity, the medieval repositories we call prisons would soon be museum pieces.

New Deal? Fine! But while we are at it, why not throw overboard some of the nonsensical *rules* by which we have been trying to play the game? Isn't it about time that we abandoned the Noah's Ark system?

In an early issue:
"Blundering Toward Citizenship,"
 by Charles H. Seaver

FIRE DOCTOR

BY PEGGY ALBION



Drawings by Donald McKay

THE BUSBEES — Jacques and Julianna — and I had lingered over our luncheon coffee. There is nowhere that lingering over coffee is quite such a delight as in the Busbees' cabin at Jugtown Pottery, thirty miles from Pinehurst, twenty-five miles from Ashboro — no telephone, no radio, no communication except the roadway winding through the pines.

Suddenly the doorway framed Rancy, the "man about the place."

"Mr. Busbee, kin I git yore car? My young un's been scalded bad, an' I got to take him off."

Julianna was on her feet. "Where is he, Rancy? Can I help?"

Nory, Rancy's wife, was on the porch by this time. The two-year-old baby in her arms was

screaming and twisting in agony. His scantily clad body was covered with burns — face, chest, legs red as a boiled lobster.

"He turned the kittle over on him," Nory explained.

"Let me make soda packs for him," Julianna said, starting toward her kitchen.

"Naw, 'tain't no use. I better take him off." Rancy's blue eyes turned to the screaming child.

"But, Rancy, the soda packs will fix him up. It will save you a doctor's bill." Julianna poised for action.

Rancy looked at the floor, then muttered, "Ain't aimin' to take him to no doctor. Cuno'll blow hit out. He don't charge nuthin'."

"Cuno? Who's Cuno? What do you mean, 'blow it out'?" Jacques Busbee knew, but asked.

"Ain't you all heard about Cuno Crisco? He's a fire blower. 'Tain't nobody round here don't know 'bout him. Lemme have the car so's I kin git the young un over thar quick."

"Sure, you can have the car, Rancy. I'll go with you." Julianna was pulling on her hat.

"Let me in on this too," I whispered.

"Come along but don't say a word. You're an outsider — a furriner." Her low voice was whimsical, but no expression crossed her face. Julianna has learned the knack of immobility of countenance to the point where the natives accept her as one of themselves, though this is not the sole reason for their acceptance.

"I learned to walk over at Why Not. My Dad was the doctor over there. I'm not a furriner," I protested, as we climbed into the car.

"'Twas too long ago. You've been in Washington and New York too long. You know what *you* are," Julianna gibed back at me. I subsided, afraid of being left behind, and in silence, except for the baby's unbroken

screaming, we tore down the dusty road.

"Where does Cuno live?" Julianna asked Rancy as he swung sharp to the left and crossed a primitive bridge at the foot of a steep, rough hill.

Rancy spat voluminously before answering. "Over back of the Bresh."

"What is the Bresh?" I whispered.

"Wait until you see. Nothing like it in the world. It's where the neighborhood gets its summer religion." Julianna managed to pitch her answer so low that the baby's screams drowned it out as far as Rancy and Nory were concerned.

We were speeding past a weather-beaten frame house which had spilled a yardful of sun-soaked children out among the sweet Williams and verbenas. In silent dignity they stared at us. Their health-filled, contented faces registered nothing, but their keen eyes missed no detail of the car or its passengers. They probably told later, granting they condescended to speak to anyone, that "Rancy Moore tuk his young un over to Cuno's to-day to git the fire blowed outn hit." They were of the neighborhood, and the neighborhood knew from experience about Cuno, the Fire Blower.

II

THE BABY was still screaming. "He's startin' to blister. The hide will be comin' off'n him," Nory said to Rancy, as he swung the car to the right into a narrower, bumpier road.

"We got to git out an' walk frum here." Rancy jerked the car to a stop as he spoke.

Nory climbed out unassisted and carried the screaming child against her bony shoulder down the footpath Rancy had already taken.

"This is the Bresh," Julianna told me.

I swiftly noted a rectangular, brush-covered arbor, supported by oak saplings. Logs with rough planks across, a broad aisle up the center, a board platform with a plank seat behind a board nailed across two posts to form a table, an open square in front of it filled with leaves and hay. Exactly in the middle of each side of the arbor was an oblong based on oak saplings, filled with sod and flint rocks.

"What are they? They look like pagan altars," I said.

"And are. They fill them with light-wood — fat pine. When burning, they give the light

for the meetings. That hay and leaf space is for the mourners to roll in." Julianna gave this explanation as we hurried after Rancy and Nory, who were approaching a small, rough cabin where the path ended.

The baby still screamed. It had not stopped for a moment during the entire journey.

A round-bellied, flop-eared dog leaped up with a fierce bark as Rancy started around the end of the cabin.

"Shet up!" he ordered. But the mongrel barked all the more fiercely.

"He's chained so's he can't git at you," Rancy assured us over his shoulder.

With fear-filled eyes Nory circled beyond the length of the chain. The dog snarled and leaped at her.

"Don't do that, little puppy. No, little puppy." Julianna calmly kept to the path. The dog dropped his bristling hair but continued to bark.

"Cuno ain't about," Rancy said, looking at the padlocked door.

"You got to find him, Rancy." Nory's brows contracted with a spasm of mother pain.

Rancy walked past the bed of purple verbenas, enclosed with glistening flint rocks, through the herb-filled yard, crushing under his heavy feet the tender young leaves of tansy, wormwood, and mullen, grinding his boot heels into the bed of mustard green which we knew was the one variant in Cuno's diet of fat-back and "Irish pertaters." He paused, sweeping the field with keen, long-ranged eyes, then threw back his head and sent a shrill call echoing and re-echoing through the distant woods.

III

SILENTLY and suddenly, as if he had risen out of the earth, the figure of a man appeared. With unhurrying step he came toward the group. The dog continued to bark, the baby still screamed, but the long, even stride was not hurried. He passed the corner of the house and stooped to pat the raving dog.

"I heard you barkin' and knowed thar was somebody about. Now lay down." The dog flopped at his master's feet. His duty was done, his responsibility ended. He could go back to sleep. The master straightened his back and faced us.

Shaggy, red eyebrows lifted over eyes red-brown, liquid, and soft, kind as the heart of God. A swift smile melted thin lips from over jagged saw teeth. Blue overalls flapped over bare feet that moved softly across the green herbs to Nory, holding the screaming child toward him.

"He scalded hisself, Cuno. Blow the fire outn him," Nory said. Her voice carried perfect faith that it would be done.

The man's arms cradled the tortured little body. A look of such tenderness, such ineffable love transfigured the face — weather-beaten, sun-darkened, age-marked — that it became only a light. He bent his head over the child. Eyes closed, he muttered words we only partially caught. Three times he muttered, then three times he blew upon the burns.

The child still twisted and cried. Again he muttered. Again he blew. Suddenly the child became limp in his arms. Handing him tenderly to his mother, Cuno unlocked the door of his cabin. Throwing it wide open, he crossed to the opposite door and threw it wide. Low, split-bottomed chairs were pushed toward us. We sank upon them. Nory laid the sleeping child across her knees.

Cuno sat in the low chair in the doorway, his head tipped against the wall, his eyes looking out across the woods. Only a thrush note broke the stillness. Liquid, cool, clear, the bird's song dropped through the young oak leaves. I moved, to be sure I was not dreaming.

Then Cuno turned and smiled. "Now, Nory, don't put nuthin' on hit. When you git home, grease him with a little mutton taller an' lay a clean cloth over the places so's nuthin' won't git in 'em. You won't have no more trouble 'bout hit."

"Wisht you'd let me pay you sumpin, Cuno," Rancy said.

"No. I can't never take nuthin' fer hit. If I did I couldn' never do hit no more. You has to blow when you's asked, go an' go willin' when you's called. The hand of the Lord is on you, an' you jes has to do hit." He looked at the sky, blue and flecked with white clouds. The



thrush notes beat into our ears with his words, making a strange unreality. Would we waken soon?

With Nory carrying the sleeping child, we walked down the narrow, smooth path, past the Bresh with its pagan altars, and climbed into the car.

"When the car starts I'll wake up, or else the baby will start to scream again," I thought.

We bumped out of the narrow, rough road into the dusty, more traveled highway. As we passed the weather-beaten house that had spilled the children into the yard filled with sweet William and verbena, a girl with a new-born baby in her arms stood by the fence, looking at us.

"Howdy, Rancy," she said. "Been over to Cuno's to git the fire blowed outn the young un?"

"Yes, Ethel. He got scalded, an' Cuno blowed hit outn him jes like he done hit fer you when you set the flatiron down on one of the young un's hands."

"That shore was a bad burn. He had to blow three times afore he done hit." Ethel stated it as a commonplace, everyday occurrence.

The baby stirred in Nory's arms. He sat up. I waited to hear him cry, but he laughed and stretched his arms toward the little baby in Ethel's arms. When Rancy started the car again, he reached over and played with the steering wheel. Not a whimper or a sign of discomfort was shown during the entire drive back.

IV

IN THE Busbees' book-lined living room Julianna and I faced each other in wide-eyed wonder.

"Do you believe we saw what we did see?" we asked each other.

Then, "Let's go back over there and find out what he said and how he did it," I urged.

"He won't tell you, but we'll go," Julianna agreed. So we went.

As we walked again up the smooth, beaten path to the cabin under the giant oak, we saw the Fire Blower sitting very still, with his head tipped against the wall.

Again the mongrel pup warned that furriers were about. Slowly Cuno turned his head, recognized us, and with simple dignity invited us in.

We sat facing the fireplace. His coffee pot stood unemptied on the ashes. A skillet, a hearth oven, a "spider" leaned against the fireplace. Summer or winter, he cooked his own food over the open flame.

He had attempted decoration of the mantel-piece. A dull cloth that had started to be tapestry but failed was stretched taut across one end of it. Pictures of a man, a woman, and a little girl, cut from a newspaper supplement, were pinned against the cloth. Pasted beside the little girl's figure was a tiny outline drawing of a fish. "Why these particular pictures?" I wondered.

A pine table, two huge pine beds, ropes hung with his entire wardrobe filled the back of the room. But the wide-flung doors let in the glory outside.

"Mr. Crisco," Julianna began. "We came back to talk with you. Please tell us, can you heal anything except burns?"

"No. I don't never do nuthin' but blow the fire outn them as gits burnt."

"But why?" Julianna asked. "Seems to me that if you can do that you could do other big things if you tried." She was careful to use the simple words he could follow.

"You know God A'mighty has got sumpin fer everbody to do, and they couldn' do nuthin' 'thout hit was what he meant 'em to do. He jes meant me to do the blowin'." He lapsed into silence. There was a curious quality of kindness and inclusiveness in that silence.

"How did you learn to do this fire blowing?" I asked.

His red-brown eyes looked at me meditatively. Evidently he decided I was not too far on the outer rim of the universe to answer. "Ole man Pete Bird read hit to me when I was a boy 'bout eighteen year' old," he said slowly. "I knowed as soon as I heard it I could do hit. I been doin' hit ever sence. I'm nigh 'bout sixty-two now. I've cuored many a burnt un in them years. Hit would shore fool you ef you knowed how many I have blowed."

"Why do you blow? Why don't you just speak?"

"Breath is pure. Hit comes right from God." The answer was swift, unhesitating, sure.

"I jes blow an' make 'em peaceable, then the burn heals up 'thout no more trouble. When the fire is blowed out hit don't never leave no scar."

"Have you ever failed?" I asked.

"No, I never did. One man I had to stay with two hours. I never did see a man in sech a fix but I shore cuord him."

"Do you pray when you blow?"

"I shore do. Hit's all done through an' by the good Lord. A man ain't no power to do nuthin'. He's perfectly he'pless. Ain't no power but jes what He gives."

V

SILENCE again fell between us. The clear, rolling notes of the thrush singing, the wind in the leaves overhead, the mother hen calling her chickens, the beating of our own thoughts — that was all — or was it all?

"Mr. Crisco, what was it you said three times to-day before you blew on the baby's burns?"

A great dignity enveloped him. "I reckon I cain't tell you that. Heap of folks been after me to tell 'em. Ef I was to tell three I'd be done. I couldn' he'p 'em no more. Some day, Mis' Busbee, I'll tell you what I says. You shore he'ps a heap in this neighborhood, and somebody ort to know ef I wuz to pass on."

"Thank you, Mr. Crisco." Julianna was almost too deeply moved to speak further. Then: "Come over and tell me whenever you feel you want to. I'll do my best to help, just as you have done."

"I'm shore." A long pause. "They's a sight

uv 'em gits burnt. They come frum way over
yan Little River — twenty mile'."

We moved lingeringly through the door.
"Thank you, Mr. Crisco, for all you have told
us."

We were down the steps and paused beside
the purple verbenas. Somehow its regal color
and humble simplicity seemed a symbol of the
man who looked down at us from his doorway.

"You're shore welcome." Still we paused.
Then a strange, mystic sentence came from his
lips. "God knows what's in a man afore he's
ever born. This knowin' how to blow fire out
was give' to me — some'r's —" The flash died
swiftly. Just a kindly old man with jagged saw
teeth, scraggly red hair, and eyes like bottom-
less pools flecked with light was saying, "Well,
you all come over ag'in when you will."

Down the beaten path, back past the

Bresh Julianna Busbee and I walked through
sunlight, pale gold against young, green oak
leaves.

"I heard him say something about 'three
angels from the East' — then, 'in the name of
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,'" I
mused.

"Yes, but does it matter what he said? The
thing is we saw a miracle. Can you deny it?"

I couldn't, nor did I wish to. It was a strange
thing that had been revealed to us there be-
neath the giant oak that sheltered the cabin of
Cuno, the Fire Blower.

His ritual remained his secret, but he had
revealed a great and startling truth. A miracle
had been done because a simple, illiterate man
had given himself in unselfish, compassionate
yearning to ease the pain of all who had faith
enough to follow the path to his cabin door.

The Word Not Spoken

One word, if spoken, might have changed the day
From glimmering twilight to a high white noon;
But I had turned to take my leave too soon,
And you were at a loss for what to say.
Thus did our gleaming moment flame and die —
The word not spoken, like an unsheathed blade,
Ripped into ribbons all the dreams we made
And flung them to the winds that seared the sky.

If I should ever meet you in a crowd,
Or someday, in the quiet autumn rain,
Should hear your breathless laughter once again,
My heart from out my lips would cry aloud
The word, the unsaid word, the shining word
That beats forever in my heart unheard.

ROBERT E. MITCHELL
Miami University; Oxford, Ohio

WOODCUT OF A PRISONER

A Short Story

BY IRVING STONE

HE CAME UP on the terrace of the hotel from the little path that bordered the Oise and asked if he might be served a cup of tea. His toes protruded from the worn-out canvas of a pair of tennis sneakers. The upper half of a winter bathrobe was gathered about his waist with a sash. His voice was quiet, almost shy, yet there radiated from him the friendly warmth of the man who is sure of his world and loves it. I wondered who he was and what he was doing in Auvers-sur-l'Oise.

Having finished my tea and the perusal of the *Herald-Tribune* that I had picked up in Paris the day before, I walked down the steps of the hotel and struck out along the verdant path toward Pointoise. The river was a cool green; trees and high shrubs closed over the winding path with a sun-shot Gothic arch. When the chill of the dampish banks crept into the air, I turned my footsteps back to Auvers and drifted into the dusk.

Then I saw him coming toward me. He was looking at things as he passed: at the path which flowed to follow the river; the working-men bathing away the toil of the day; the curtain of foliage against the sunset clouds. He saw me and smiled sweetly.

The path was narrow. I was lonely. I grimaced with a weary crinkling about the eyes and said, "Hello."

"Oh, how nice," he said, "you speak English. But of course you do; it is your newspaper I have taken from the terrace. Please forgive me; I did not know you would return."

"You must keep it," I said. "I have finished."

Once again he looked at me with that boyish, clean-cut openness. He was short and stocky, with massive arms, a broad chest, and sturdy legs. His face was light and cherubic despite the square jaw. A single curl of blond, fluffy hair waved on his angular head.

"This is how you knew I spoke English?" he asked, fingering the paper.

"No, your French had an English accent."

He laughed with quiet good nature. As the cool caress of his voice rippled over me, a number of tight vises suddenly let go and released the edges of my soul.

"I am a German," he said. "But my mother was English. That is how I speak your language."

"Are you in Auvers for a vacation?"

"I am living here permanently with a French family," he replied. "During the war my plane was shot down in these cornfields. The French interned me in the village. I loved the country so much that after I was pensioned out of the army I came back to stay. It is quiet, it is charming, is it not? and the peasants are delightful. But what brings an American to such an out-of-the-way place?"

"I am searching for souvenirs of Vincent Van Gogh. He died in Auvers, in that little inn just across from the *mairie*."

At the mention of Vincent Van Gogh, a radiance broke over his face. "I love Vincent's work above all others," he cried. "I think him the greatest painter ever born; greater even than Rembrandt or El Greco. I love Vincent like my own father!"

We found ourselves wringing hands. No two men can love Vincent Van Gogh and not become fast friends. While we spoke reverently of him, the sun sank behind a horizon slope and left the valley of the Oise in green darkness.

"My name is Rudolphe," he said shyly. "It is many months since I have spoken English. We will spend to-morrow together, yes? We will follow the river down to Pointoise. They have a lovely tenth-century Roman church and a quaint little village terraced on a hill. I love every corner of it and I will show it all to you. I must go now; my people will be

waiting to serve supper. Until to-morrow!"

The path back to the hotel had thickened. The flowing water of the Oise was cluttered with the night shadows of trees. But I felt happy, for I had found a friend.

II

AUVERS is a sleepy village with red-tile roofs, a Place de Mairie fronted by cafés and shops, and a patch of peasant houses pasted on the side of a hill with the river murmuring softly below. After twisting up and down a number of dirt roads I came to Rudolphe's. I tinkled a little bell that was attached to the iron gate. The peasant admitted me with a "Bonjour, Monsieur." There was a well in the yard, with chickens clucking about it, a few fruit trees ripe to be plucked, a square of clean, provincial sunlight. The peasant showed me the way up a flight of crude, wooden stairs. I knocked at a door, and Rudolphe bade me welcome.

The room in which he lived had scrubbed, unpainted plank walls, a bed, table, chair, and ancient wardrobe. It was a modern hermit's cell, chaste, austere, poverty-stricken. From the door to the side wall, a sheet of rough burlap was hung on a wire, to form a corridor; the peasant and his wife had no other means of getting to their sleeping quarters.

Yet, in spite of the material meanness of the room, it had a quiet, homogeneous air, as though the man who slept in the bed, dressed before the wardrobe, sat on the chair, and worked at the table lived at peace with himself. There were no torn and twisted currents to cut one's words to shreds. Only over the work table, on which were littered manuscripts and the implements of the artist's trade, did a sense of struggle hover.

While awaiting my arrival, Rudolphe had been working; his frayed white shirt was open at the neck, his sleeves rolled up. "Do you like woodcuts?" he asked, with that soft, lovable smile. "I finished one last week."

He went to the wardrobe, in which hung only one suit of clothes and an extra shirt, and from the top shelf drew out a picture. He walked to the window and held the woodcut in a good light. It was the head of a German soldier in a prison cell, the head a poignant black against the black bars and meager light

of day; it was the head of all humanity, thrust into a black prison cell and made to suffer mutely for it knew not what crime.

"Vincent would have liked this, Rudolphe," I murmured.

He pressed my arm in gratitude, then gazed out the window at the chickens around the well and the yellow cornfields that stretched down to the river's edge. On his work table I noticed his name on a book. The cover was a woodcut of a gorilla, adorned in all the pompous trappings of the German military officer.

"It is a satiric novel about the militarist," he said as I picked up the book. "I don't think much of it now because I feel that satire is only a method of retaliation. The book was banned by the government the day before it was to have gone on sale. The thousand copies still lie in the cellar of the publisher's house in Berlin. They nearly took away my war pension, too. It is only twenty-eight dollars, but without it I should be destitute."

"What are you working on now?"

"Some woodcuts, a novel about Germany, a few topical essays. I work very leisurely. I am in no hurry to express myself. I wait until my thoughts mature and mellow."





"And are you in no hurry to succeed?"

"Ah, well, there is very little thought of success in the minds of young Germans. I think of success in terms of only the reality and completeness of my work. During the war I killed men; now I find it hard not to love everyone. If I never hate a man again, never rest content with less than perfection in my work, I may be able to forgive myself for all the suffering I caused. Shall we start on our walk now? The sun will be mounting, and it will be warm along the river."

III

A SHORT WAY beyond Auvers the trees disappeared, and the Oise ran into a stretch of hot sunshine. The train for Paris funneled black smoke in the distance. On the other side of the valley, cornfields blazed into ripeness. The path led past some abandoned quarries, with the ground stained copper and blue where the minerals had soaked through. We saw tiny villages clinging to the sides of hills, their red

roofs firing the landscape with splotches of flame.

Rudolphe and I chatted gayly as we strode along at a fast clip. Several times I was startled by the colloquial twists to his English. At last I spoke to him about it.

"You should not be surprised," he said. "I have been in love with an American girl for three years."

"Where is the American girl now?"

"In Pittsburgh."

I laughed, for I thought he was joking with me.

"Her father is a Pittsburgh banker," continued Rudolphe. "She went back home last winter. Have you ever been in Pittsburgh?"

"Yes."

"It is a pleasant city?"

"Not exactly."

Rudolphe sighed. "So she said. But her family made her go back. I met her three years ago at an American University Club tea. She told me she had been unhappy at home for

years and had finally persuaded her father to allow her to come over here with a University study group. Her name was Alicia. She wasn't a beautiful girl but she had a curious way of understanding things before I even said them. It was as though she had been groping for those very thoughts. She had a great hunger for tenderness. In Pittsburgh, she said, everything was hard and cold. We found each other sympathetic and, since we were both lonely, that sympathy burst into love before our very eyes."

"How nice," I murmured.

"Yes, it was nice," he agreed. "You go on for years without a soul to share your life, and suddenly there are two of you instead of one. Everything you do and say becomes important."

"We had a good many obstacles to overcome. Alicia was under the strict supervision of the University Group matrons; she had to be in every week night by ten o'clock. On week-ends she could go out with men, but they had to be approved by the matrons. Of course there was no chance for me. Alicia got permission to go to the Museum at three every afternoon. We would meet at some obscure little café and pour out our hearts over a *café au lait*. I had a tiny room on the fourth floor of a stone house in Montmartre, but Alicia didn't come there for months. She was on a liberal allowance, and I guess I was ashamed of my poverty. Besides, I wanted her to come when she was completely ready, and not before."

"You were right."

"When we finally knew that we were in love, we began meeting in my room every afternoon, sometimes of an evening when she could steal away. We explored Paris together: the quaint, tucked-away places. Our marriage was a beautiful one, even though no ceremony had been performed."

"This went on for about half a year. Then spring came, and we longed to get out in the country together. I knew a family living in a seventeenth-century house in Mesnil-le-Roi, hidden in the forest of Ste. Germain-en-Laye. Alicia told the matrons that she was staying with some family friends, who really did have a home in Ste. Cloud. We spent Saturdays and Sundays roaming the forest. How completely

happy we were! We planned my work, how she was going to help me and share in everything I did."

"Then one week-end the University authorities became suspicious. They went out to Ste. Cloud on Sunday and learned that Alicia had never stayed there overnight. They were afraid the scandal would ruin the possibility of all future University groups — it was a commercial enterprise, you know — so when Alicia came home that night she was locked in her room, with a guard stationed outside the door. Early in the morning she was literally carried into a closed automobile, whisked out to Cherbourg, and locked in a cabin aboard the *Caronia*, which sailed that afternoon. The poor child was still stunned when she reached New York. I knew nothing of what had happened. I was terribly worried when she did not meet me for several days, but she had warned me against communicating with her at the University house. At the end of the week I received a cable from New York explaining everything."

"Her family was not told of what had happened; the matrons simply reported that she had been sent home for breaking the rules — which was true enough. We wrote to each other every day — long, passionate letters in which we vowed our undying love. And six months later Alicia came back to Paris alone to finish her studies. In return for this liberty she promised her father to marry the bank vice-president he had selected for his son-in-law."

"Alicia and I went to live with the family in Mesnil-le-Roi. Our happiness was complete. Three times a week she went in to Paris to the Sorbonne. I met her in Paris sometimes. We went to concerts and the opera. Late at night we took the train out to Ste. Germain and walked the three miles through the black, sleeping forest to Mesnil, to our little room."

"Alicia decided it was about time to let her family know. She wrote a long letter telling them she had found the man she loved and that she wanted their permission to marry. Her father cabled her to return to Pittsburgh at once. She wrote entreating messages; her father's cables became more insistent. Finally he told her that her allowance would be cut off altogether if she did not come home."

IV

"I HAD ONLY my pension of twenty-eight dollars a month. Alicia had been paying her share of the expenses. In Paris I could barely get room, food, and drawing materials for that money. But I told her of a place on the Riviera, Cagnes-sur-Mer, where we could both scrape along on what I received. It would have been bitterly hard, but we could have done it. And we would have had each other.

"Here is where I fail to understand Alicia. She loved me with her whole heart. We both knew that our coming together had been a miracle and that if we separated life would always be fragmentary and incomplete. Yet she suddenly became practical. She decided that since we couldn't live without her allowance she had better go home and persuade her father. 'Love flies out the window,' she said, 'when poverty comes in the door.'"

"She was simply being American," I remarked.

We came to the spot where the first bridge had been thrown over the Oise by the Romans. On the other side of the river was a stone crag, with a town perched crazily on top. We crossed the bridge, entered a *patisserie* at the base of the butte, and bought a couple of cakes.

"I begged and pleaded with her not to go back to Pittsburgh," continued Rudolphe. "I was afraid she would be caught. But her father stopped the allowance, and the Cunard Line wrote that reservations had been made for her crossing on the *Tuscania* at the end of the week. So one day she wept in my arms in the Gare Ste. Lazare, and waved to me frantically from the window of the boat train. She swore a thousand times that she would come back with her father's consent, that she would never stop loving me.

"That was a year ago. Three times she reserved passage and three times she canceled it. She says she loathes her life in Pittsburgh, that she misses me every hour, that she can't go on living if she doesn't have me again. And yet she stays on there!

"But next month I am to meet my fate. She is coming with her father, mother, and brother. The family is going to look me over and pass judgment. If they approve, they will let Alicia marry me. Do you think I have any chance?"



I gazed at his shock of blond hair waving in the wind, at the soft, kindly eyes of the artist, at the truncated winter bathrobe with the black sash, at the bare toes sticking out of the tennis sneakers. Then I thought of the smokestacks of Pittsburgh.

"No, Rudolphe," I said, "you haven't a chance in the world."

"I promise to love her all my life," said Rudolphe, "and to be always kind to her. I will work with her to develop whatever may be in her soul. We will have children and be more happy with every passing day. Tell me, is that not something to offer the parents of a girl?"

I took my eyes off an exquisite wooden Madonna and said, "Where is Alicia's family going to stop in Paris?"

"At the Claridge."

"Was that a good suit of clothes I saw hanging in your wardrobe?"

"It is a coat and pants. They don't quite match."

"My dear Rudolphe," I said, "the doorman at the Claridge won't even let you in!"

"I thought perhaps you could tell me some things to say to Alicia's parents."

"Would you care to go to Pittsburgh to live, Rudolphe?"

It was his turn to think I was joking with him. "What would I do in Pittsburgh?" he asked.

"Become a banker."

Rudolphe wriggled his bare toes in the sunlight and smiled wistfully.

"To be frank with you, Rudolphe, Americans despise artists — unless they happen to be commercially successful. You are an expatriate, a pacifist, a Bohemian; in short, everything that is anathema to our hundred-percenters. Their sole reaction will be that Alicia has gone mad. If they find they cannot convince her of that fact, they may offer to fit you out in some decent clothes, take you back to Pittsburgh, and put you behind a cage in a bank. Like that German prisoner in your woodcut."

"But he wouldn't let her starve to death, would he, her own father?"

When I did not answer, he went on in a low voice, "Then my only hope is that she will renounce her family and go with me to Cagnes-sur-Mer. Poverty does not bring the worst kind of bitterness."

We wandered among the narrow, winding streets and gazed from strange angles at the juxtaposition of roofs, church spires, and trees that tumbled down the hillside. Rudolphe's sensitivity leaped out to every touch of beauty: to the delicate designs, the contrasts of color, the flowing of lines, the grouping of form. He made me feel that all my life I had been blind to the innate loveliness of the world. That hideous bathrobe, the tattered tennis shoes, the frayed shirt and patched trousers could not hide the one man among millions, the artist with as fine a soul as God will allow on this hate-swept world. And then I thought of Pittsburgh — its factories and banks — and Alicia. I could not restrain a sigh.

We had a pot of tea and a lingering cigarette at a sidewalk café, then took the train back to Auvers. I was to sleep that night in the bed in which Vincent Van Gogh had died exactly forty years before. Rudolphe agreed to have breakfast with me in the little café room where Vincent's body had been laid out on the pool table and Doctor Gachet had cried, "He is not dead! He will never die! He will live forever in the hearts of the people!"

V

I DID NOT sleep that night, for Vincent's tragic, loveless life and his equally tragic death lay heavy on my heart. When I stared into the

blackness of his death chamber, Vincent's face somehow fell away, and in its stead came the sweet, kindly face of Rudolphe, alone, despised, poverty-stricken, doomed to a loveless existence.

He was waiting for me the next morning when I came downstairs. Dusted sunlight streamed in the windows to absorb the stale-beer smell of the inn.

"It is a beautiful day again," he said. "There is an hour before train time for us to visit Vincent's grave. We will walk up to the cemetery, yes?"

We went out into the Place de Mairie, walked between high garden walls, and climbed a gentle slope past the Catholic church. On all sides of us were golden cornfields sunning themselves. Poppies were plentiful. We picked an armful for Vincent's grave. The little cemetery, quiet and deserted, ran down the side of the hill.

Side by side stood two austere tombstones. One read, "Ici repose Vincent Van Gogh, 1853-1890." In the next grave lay Vincent's beloved brother. On his stone we read, "Ici repose Theodore Van Gogh, 1857-1891."

Rudolphe laid his flowers on the graves, then indicated the next plot, which was vacant. "I have been saving a few francs a month to buy this ground," he said. "It is the loveliest spot in all the world. It makes me happy to think that when I die I shall lie next to Vincent in this little cemetery among the cornfields."

I shouldered my rucksack, and we walked down the hill to the station. The train was due in a very few moments. Rudolphe and I held each other's hands. The train came; I gave his arm a final squeeze and jumped into a third-class carriage. I slammed the compartment door behind me, lowered the window, and leaned out.

"Good-bye," he said softly. "Wish me luck."

"Good-bye, Rudolphe," I answered.

The train began to move. I felt a smile come over my face, a smile of sheer happiness that emanated from my heart. That smile and happiness were on my face and in my heart as long as Rudolphe was still in sight. But when the train rounded a curve and he was lost to me, I sat down on the hard leather bench and felt a great sadness suddenly possess my soul.

OUR ROSTRUM

These columns are open to brief letters commenting upon any article or subject that has appeared in The Forum. Because of space limitations, the Editor must reserve the right to publish letters only in part.



"PERSECUTION"

To the Editor:

I wish to register a protest to your statement in the "Editorial Foreword" ["From Pillowcases to Shirts"] of the September FORUM. You say:

"Religiously they [the Irish Catholics] are mistrusted because of the poetic beauty of their ceremonies . . . the austerities and self-discipline . . . they practice on their self-sacrificing lives."

I certainly can't believe that even the most antagonistic non-Catholics are quite as stupid as that. The dark and mysterious ways you so discreetly soft-pedal as "bad urban politics" are a very considerable and inevitable reason for such distrust. Another cause is the assumption of Catholics that only Catholic dogmas have any right to be defended, their poor sportsmanship when any of their tenets is disputed, as witness Father Moore's peevish back fire in the "Rostrum" of the September FORUM.

Because of that attitude that cries "Persecution" at the slightest disagreement, scarcely a printed page in this country dares to rebuke the Catholic Church for its fight against the right of every woman to know her own affairs and protect herself from the tragedy of too rapid childbearing. Yet how the Methodist Church took it on the chin from every newspaper and magazine in the country for backing Prohibition!

C. H. BARNHART

Dumont, N. J.

INDICTMENT

To the Editor:

I have just received the cryptic notice that I can resubscribe to your magazine for \$3.50. To this I can only reply that I appreciate your regard in thus proffering me privileges.

The truth of the matter, however, is that your magazine is not worth even \$3.50. . . .

If THE FORUM is a Magazine of Controversy, its controversies are limited to such subjects as to make of the seriousness of the contests a mockery comparable to the savage thrusts of children armed with yardsticks. If this criticism is not sufficient, add to it the charge of ponderousness, of literary sterility.

You made bold to introduce a card with the titles of some September articles. One is Mary Borden's "What Religion Means to Me." Sirs, this stirs no faint flutter of interest in me. The question of the meaning of religion is vital neither to me nor

to the world at large, let alone vital in the terms of one Mary Borden. Further, it has been rehashed so many times in the columns of THE FORUM that I am familiar with the unfailing lack of wit or novelty with which it is treated.

Henry George has been taken up time and again by such magazines as yours. Miss Tarbell's article ["New Dealers of the 'Seventies — Henry George and Edward Bellamy"] would not interest me. Nor would a woman plowing in cotton ["A Woman Plows in Cotton," by Julia Railey]. Mr. Barber's ambiguous title ["The Opium of the People — Atheism in the Soviet Republic"] also leaves me cold. In short, September looks as THE FORUM has always looked to me. I note with amusement that three fourths of your proudly advertised contents for September are by women, which is by way of pointing a damning finger at yourself for being guilty of the omnipresent danger of sinning against the readers with weak, commercial pap. In short, your magazine is an Old Maid. . . .

My more violent impulse is to scent this envelope with the delicate *odeur* of fragrant, violet sachet, then to tie it in pink ribbon. Never one to cry for chest-thumping virility, social purpose, or even for "American Mercurian" debunking insight, I am yet outraged by the murmuring insouciance of your spiritless magazine. The few evidences of editorial strength which I have observed in recent months are not sufficient in number and importance to justify prolonging further the disappointing perusal of your limp rag's hollow interior.

ROBERT RUSSELL

Los Angeles, Calif.

Without attempting to argue the significance, real or imaginary, of a table of contents in which women authors are prominent, it should be noted that, in the six issues of THE FORUM ending with October of this year, of the eighty articles published (excluding "Editorial Forewords," poetry, and art work), fifty-seven have been by men, twenty-three by women.

THE OTHER SIDE

To the Editor:

. . . An article, "The Opium of the People," for September, 1934, in parts is an insult to Russian believers. Mr. Barber, the author of the article, deliberately made an untrue statement when he wrote: "In former times no peasant would think of planting a crop without a priest and the

formality of having it blessed — for which a charge was made." I am a Russian peasant, born and raised on the farm in the village; I have been planting crops for fifteen years but I never heard of such a thing. . . .

Also, it isn't right to say that "these same peasants were really pagan at heart." Russian peasants may not be so keen on rational or theological religion, but surely they believe in and love Christ. I don't know how things are going on at the present time in Russia, but before the Revolution there were thousands of travelers all over Russia without a penny in their pockets, and they always had plenty of bread and shelter among the peasants, in the name of Christ. The peasants learned this from their Church and priests, as Christ's wish. I am saying this, also, from my own experience. . . .

Neither is the Russian Church so "corrupt" and "ignorant" as Mr. Barber thinks. We Russian believers are proud of our Church, for She has saved Russia from destruction already two times, and we believe that the same Church will save Russia again from her enemy — this time from the invasion of an international, demoralizing, un-Christian government; for Russian peasants trust and support only that government which believes in God and protects His Church.

T. SAVIN

Brooklyn, N. Y.

SILVER SHIRTS

To the Editor:

. . . After reading the "Editorial Foreword" ["From Pillowcases to Shirts," September FORUM,] particularly . . . relative to the Silver Shirts, I have come to the conclusion that your knowledge of the organization is somewhat limited or . . . your intellect is too mediocre to grasp the principles of this organization.

There is no use in going into any lengthy discussion of the matter with you, but the fact remains that your issue of September would have been a much better publication minus the "Editorial Foreword." Your opinion of the Silver Legion will not deter its progress in the slightest or affect it in any way, but it is interesting to note how little is known of the real purposes of this organization by some individuals who seem to feel that they are well-informed.

J. W. WRISS

Oakland, Calif.

No, there is no use going into any lengthy discussion with us.

OUR ROSTRUM

GRADE CROSSINGS

Joseph B. Eastman, Federal Coördinator of Transportation, comments on Russell Holt Peters' article, "Stop, Look, and Listen!" in the October FORUM:

... Mr. Peters is entirely right in believing that the elimination of railroad-highway grade crossings is of great public importance, from the standpoint of preservation of life, limb, and property, and also of great railroad importance, from the standpoint of the operation of lighter, faster, and more frequent trains, both passenger and freight. There are many situations where the necessary preliminary engineering work has been done, so that public funds could be put to work in eliminating these crossings very quickly. I doubt whether any projects would produce more general benefits, considering the relief of unemployment, aid to the capital-goods industries, protection of the public safety, and improvement of transportation conditions. Mr. Peters also contributes a very valuable thought to the subject by his suggestion that many unimportant crossings could merely be closed under present conditions without substantial public disadvantage.

The railroads, of course, are in no position to undertake large capital expenditures for this purpose. Furthermore, it is the tremendous public expenditures on new and improved highways and the consequent development of a new type of transportation which has so greatly increased the hazards of these crossings. In the circumstances, the cost of eliminating may appropriately be made a general public burden to a much greater extent than has heretofore been customary.

W. P. Kenney, President of the Great Northern Railway Company, on the same article:

... The accidents on the grade crossings have become alarmingly numerous, and Mr. Peters is writing on a subject that is of interest to all the people. He is correct in suggesting that this is the time to secure the elimination of many dangerous grade crossings.

Our railroad has been working with the highway departments in the various states in which our railroad is located, with the idea of reducing the number of grade crossings and separating grades wherever possible. I do not think any expenditures made by the highway departments pay as good returns as those made available for grade separations. The lives saved are worth a great deal of money, and we feel that a continuance of this program should be encouraged in every way possible.

Particularly correct is Mr. Peters in his viewpoint that fewer roads, rather than more, are desirable. I think railroad men generally favor the proposition and are



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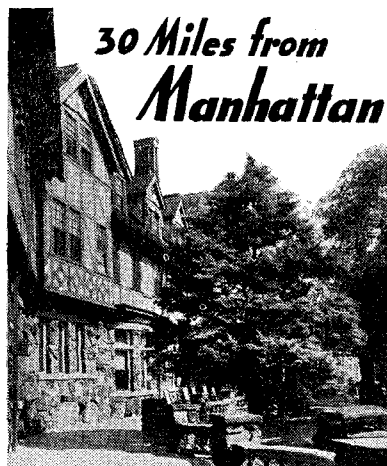
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OUR ROSTRUM

opposed to the opening of additional public or private crossings. Where money is appropriated for the separation of grades, it should be the policy of the bureau of public roads to compel the closing of nearby crossings, the traffic on which should be forced to the new crossing where the grade has been separated.

In Mr. Peters' article he mentions a town of 10,000 people that has 12 streets crossing the main line of a railroad. We have some pretty good examples of this, at Morris, Minnesota, where we have three crossings within a distance of 800 feet, all equipped with Griswold signals; at Litchfield, Minnesota, where we have six crossings within a distance of 2,000 feet; and at Pipestone, Minnesota, where we have nine crossings within a distance of 4,000 feet.

The daily papers are continually reporting terrible crossing accidents, and, where prior to the use of the automobile these accidents seldom if ever occurred, they are at the present time a problem that is extremely serious and are also a result of the new methods of transportation by private automobile, truck, and bus. I think there are about 85 fatalities a day due to the operation of the automobile, and anything that will reduce this terrific loss of life is worthy of the most serious consideration.

Considering the number of operations of buses, autos, and trucks crossing railroad tracks, the accidents, numerous as they are, are not excessive when thought is given to the number of railroad crossings and particularly when thought is given to the fact that so many of the operators, especially of the automobiles, are comparatively inexperienced.

Public funds spent for this purpose are amply justified by the results secured, and I feel that Mr. Peters is doing commendable work in calling attention in such a graphic manner to the number of accidents that have so far occurred at these crossings and the desirability of giving careful consideration to the elimination of the cause of such accidents. . . .

RACIAL PROBLEMS

To the Editor:

I have read with profound sympathy Mr. Flesher's "Emotional Tragedy of a Jew" [October FORUM]. This is a dark time, not to say a dark age. There is, however, a glimmer of light. Although Hitlerism has been infectious and has accentuated racial intolerance everywhere, yet the fact remains that the civilized world generally has isolated Germany, mostly because of the anti-Semitism of the present régime. So much at least must be said for civilization to-day. The barbarism of the present moment, born of insecurity and fear, may be a passing phase, and the Jews, with other racial

minorities, may yet feel themselves welcome partners in the nation's life. At least one may keep one's feet on the ground and yet hope for that much.

GEORGE NORLIN

Boulder, Colo.

THE PWA AND HOUSING

Harold L. Ickes, Federal Emergency Administrator of Public Works, is critical of Arthur C. Holden's "Federal Aid for the Householder," in the October number.

. . . I can find little in Mr. Holden's discussion of the Public Works Administration and its relation to low-cost housing that even approaches accuracy. The writer appears to be laboring under the misconception that PWA was created principally as a housing agency, which is totally in error.

Contrary to what Mr. Holden may assume, PWA did not turn from a primary effort in housing to other fields of activity as an alternative. The major part of our program always has been construction of federal and local projects, such as highways, bridges, schools, public buildings, dams, power plants, and similar undertakings that were not "at last resorted to" by any means but were employed deliberately from the very beginning to get men back to work and stimulate industry.

As part of its whole program PWA has allotted approximately \$150,000,000 for low-cost housing and slum clearance. Its low-cost housing activities constitute but one item in a broad, comprehensive program. It is an item that incidentally followed rather than preceded the other activities of the program.

At the present time our low-cost-housing and slum-clearance program is getting into full stride, and despite one inference of Mr. Holden's we have arrived at a point where we are ready to build houses.

DIVINE AND LUNG POWER

To the Editor:

The article "Father Divine is God" [by Lionel Levick], in the October FORUM, was especially appealing to one who has witnessed one of the frenzied gatherings in Harlem. However, I cannot share the author's bewilderment as to the magnetic power of Father Divine. To me it does not seem to be so truly wonderful.

There are, I believe, several ways of explaining the man's tremendous appeal and drawing power—at least among his Negro followers, and to some extent the whites, although the former far outnumbered the latter when I visited the hall in Harlem. First: gratitude for the Father's bountiful giving. The man does a vast amount of charitable work, evidently in a quiet, modest way. These are times when sudden appearances of checks and food are veritable blessings. Colored folks love and also have an awe for the mysterious

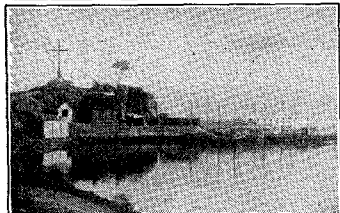
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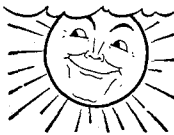
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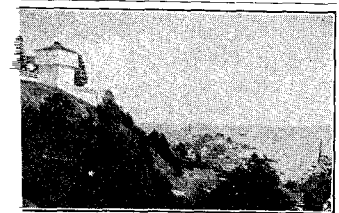
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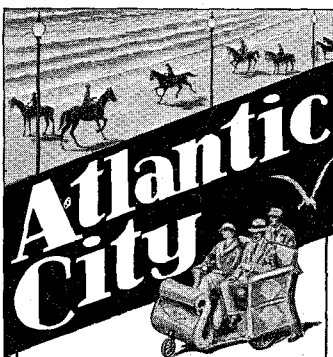
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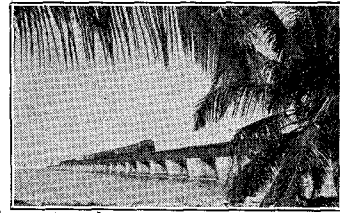
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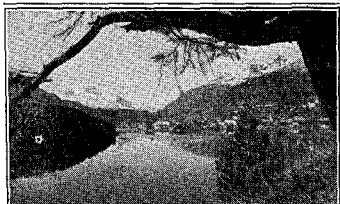
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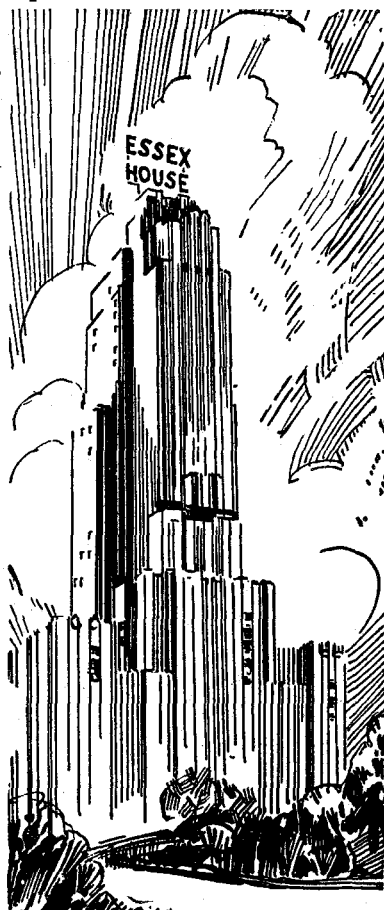
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OUR ROSTRUM

or the unseen. How does the Father do it? He must be divine. It is not difficult to see that for them such things come to be like the brushing of angels' wings.

Another explanation is that it is a new idea. One can go to a revival meeting any time, but here one actually sees God in the flesh. People grew accustomed to seeing "de Lawd" of *The Green Pastures*. Perhaps this is a repetition of that idea — this time in actual practice.

A third explanation lies in the meetings themselves. They are primarily an unleashing of the Negro's pent-up and deeply set passion for rhythm and song. Ravel's *Bolero* is a puny thing in comparison with the throbbing beat and climaxes of a typical meeting of these people. The floor sways and distresses the unmoved onlookers with the thought that everyone will be precipitated into the banquet hall below. Father Divine is the moving spirit of it all.

Mr. Levick felt that he had missed something in not becoming a part of the perspiring and frenzied crowd. On the contrary, I sensed a decided strengthening of my own religious convictions, which, I can honestly say, are not so much concerned with the receiving end of life. As in every religious cult where lung power is a decided advantage, I should like to know how many of the Father's disciples have succeeded in reaching a higher plane of living.

OLIVER G. POWELL

Jamaica, N. Y.

WOMEN AND ART

To the Editor:

I have read with much interest Mrs. Colum's article, "The Woman-Artist," in the October FORUM. I should like to suggest an explanation of some of the facts advanced in her belief that women of high artistic achievement are few and far between.

Mrs. Colum tells us that . . . when the rare woman genius does appear she, like the man genius, exhibits strong and virile qualities of many kinds. . . .

In other words, both men and women of genius are strongly sexed and strongly marked personalities. This, by the way, is in contrast to the opinion of Dr. Gina Lombroso, who, in *The Soul of Woman*, accuses American women of achievement, who are above pettiness, of being more male than female!

Mrs. Colum thinks that women's lack of emotional intensity may be due to a lack of "psychic energy," which, in turn, may be related to a lack of physical energy. The author seems uncertain just how much identity to attach to these terms. Here, in my opinion, is the crux of the situation. Grant that psychic energy and physical energy are the same, and the problem of the peculiarities of sex disappears.

I should like to point out that the scientists Crile, Cannon, Pavlov, and Sherrington demonstrated over twenty years ago that psychic and physical energy are one and the same thing. Other scientists in this and foreign countries have been proving it again and again since that time. Mental achievement not only depends upon physical energy. It *is* physical energy. . . .

The very fact that woman's metabolic rate is lower — much lower — than man's precludes the ability to rise to exquisite heights of emotional and mental achievement. . . .

ANNETTE AUSTIN HAYNES

Clinton, Conn.

To the Editor:

. . . In the realm of science, art, the professions, politics, and government men have excelled. Yet we overlook the contributions of women, their hardships, their sufferings, sacrifices, and labors that often have made the achievements of men possible. The political and economic sides of life are so emphasized that the story appears to be of one sex only.

It is scarcely three generations since women, save in very rare exceptions, have begun to try their capacity in philosophy, science, or art. In all things which there has yet been time for, women have done much and have obtained fully as high prizes as could be expected. . . .

Thousands of years of male rule have brought about the difference in the physical and mental development of the sexes. When social conditions of development are the same for each sex, then women will rise to a height of perfection that we can hardly conceive to-day, because until now no such conditions have existed in human evolution.

JANE MOFFATT

Watertown, N. Y.

PUBLIC SERVICE

To the Editor:

Will you kindly accept my thanks and congratulations upon having written such a timely and penetrating editorial ["Wanted: a Trained Public Servant"] in your October issue of THE FORUM. . . .

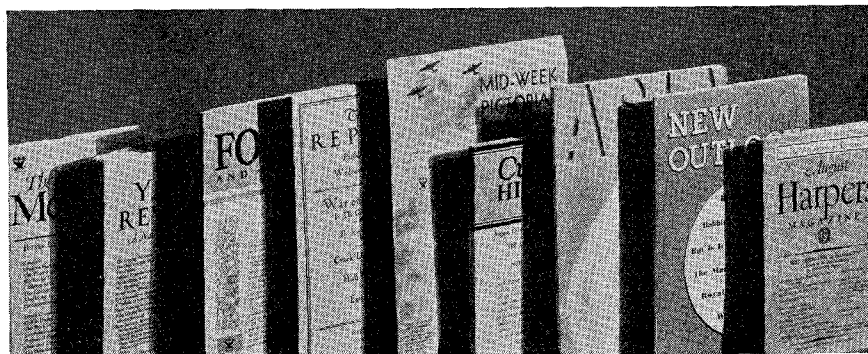
ANDREW S. MIKALIK

Oxford, O.

To the Editor:

In your October editorial, you have, I believe, dealt with the most serious problem confronting the American people to-day. Whether the way to economic and social salvation be to the right or to the left, it can, I believe, lead only to a hopeless morass of failure unless we can find some plan by which to raise the standard of those upon whom rest the responsibilities of government.

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obvious that the untrained and haphazard personnel of our government has been grossly inadequate to meet the increasingly complicated problems of political life. In fact, I think there is much ground for the belief that we have met the demand for higher standards with men inferior in character and ability to those of our oxcart days; and it has long been a source of wonder to me that some plan has not been adopted to remedy that situation. . . .

It seems to me that we should have, and should have had many years ago, an educational institution after the manner of West Point and Annapolis, in which selected young men would be trained for public service; in which they would not only receive a particular education in matters germane to that service but, what is more important, in which there would be inculcated in them a pride in, and an appreciation of the dignity of, that service. After all, it has not been so much that we lacked fit men for public life but that the standards of public service have been of such low degree that it has attracted, in too large part, the time servers and meal-ticket politicians. . . .

Critics of the idea have suggested that it would create an aristocracy in government. If the doubtful premise be conceded, I still see no merit in that criticism. There is nothing to be feared from an aristocracy characterized by honesty and intellect and courage. . . .

E. W. BUNDY

Seattle, Wash.

SHAME!

To the Editor:

I am always interested in your "Calendar of Controversy." The comments are usually to the point, just, and illuminating; but I very decidedly disagree with your comment on the Roosevelt divorces ["*DECISION: To the senior Roosevelts, who permit their adult offspring to live their lives as they see fit.*"]. There is no reason why the heading should be "Church vs. State." I do not think the decision was to the elder Roosevelts. The decision should go to Dr. Charles Fiske, who had the courage to express publicly the shame and humiliation felt by many millions of patriotic Americans who still believe in the sanctity of marriage vows and elementary morality.

ANONYMOUS

Philadelphia, Pa.

CHARITY VS. BOOT STRAPS

To the Editor:

I read with interest the article "The Wages of Charity," by Lucile Grebenc, in THE FORUM, September, 1934.

Some months ago, a wealthy woman philanthropist paid my expenses to take a trip up and down the Pacific coast

(knowing my propensity for helping to solve my patients' problems) to ferret out people who had been able to pull themselves up by their own boot straps, with the idea of passing ideas on to others who lacked initiative and courage and had a dearth of ideas. At first I foolishly gave the names of several women who had been successful in their new undertakings to others, and like Miss Grebenc these pioneering women have been hounded by people who want things laid in their laps.

Our colleges have a lot to answer for; I have yet to meet a college woman who has been able to pull herself up by her own boot straps. Colleges are not making our young people practical; the men and women who are making good are the ones who can use their hands. It is time our young people are taught to use their hands while they are acquiring their education.

ALICE S. CUTLER

Los Angeles, Calif.

VERBOSITY

To the Editor:

The September FORUM was a delightful companion for a camping trip — principally because it didn't talk too much. Just enough!

Five articles were each only four pages long. One told it in three pages. Three said all that we wanted to hear, at the time, in two pages each. And still another surprised us by only one page. . . .

One has a rankling suspicion, in plodding through the long articles published by some magazines, that the authors, possibly asked for so many words on given subjects, feel that they must spin out their scholarly ideas to that length, even by unnecessary repetitions, padding, and loosely constructed sentences.

Is not the feeling general that we gain a more satisfactory comprehension of the author's thought and argument if we read his article at one sitting than when time limitation breaks the thread and we must pick it up again?

ANNA MERRILL FOSTER

Long Beach, Calif.

BUTLER AND WAR

Excerpts from letters commenting on Smedley D. Butler's article, "War Is a Racket," in the September FORUM.

James Eary; New Haven, Conn.

General Butler proposed that in the next war the United States conscript its workers in shipyards and munition plants and pay them only \$30 a month, so that they will be on a par with the common soldiers.

Would General Butler agree to pay these war workers generous pensions for the remainder of their lives for disability actually or only presumptively connected

IN THE NOVEMBER MERCURY

DOUBTS ABOUT LIBERAL COLLEGES

Dr. Harry Woodburn Chase, chancellor of New York University, believes that the modern Liberal Arts College, because of the primary interest of its faculty in scholarship rather than in education, has failed to give its graduates a coherent and workable philosophy of life which will adapt them to a modern complex civilization. He suggests a change of emphasis in the curriculum from the formal study of languages and mathematics to the more basic and contemporary-valuable sciences, such as economics and philosophy.

THE RACKET OF STOLEN LOVE

This is an amusing attack on "the chatel theory of marriage" and a call for its abolition by legislative action in the various states. Anthony M. Turano reduces the theory to an absurdity by an interesting collection of alienation of affections suits—the theory's most popular offspring.

SHYLOCK, CHRISTIAN

This is Louis Untermeyer's ironic conception of the sixth act of "A Merchant of Venice." His Shylock is an interesting deduction, and he answers here in clever fashion those questions we feel at the end of Act V.

DRUGGED INDIVIDUALISM

Ernest Boyd flays the American conception "That the Civil Service is a sort of asylum for the disabled and incompetent—with its corollary that profit-making is the first and highest ideal of youth."

THE SAD TALE OF RAMSAY MAC

Ramsay MacDonald, according to Oswald Garrison Villard, is in a melancholy situation. A virtual prisoner of the Coalition Government, ignored by the public, scorned by his former allies—the Labor Party—because of his treason to their cause, he is retained as head of the Conservative-Coalition Party as a mere figurehead.

WHAT HAPPENS IN A STRIKE

This is first-hand information, told in a lively and dramatic fashion by Meridel Le Sueur, of what goes on backstage during a strike.

HAS INSULIN FAILED?

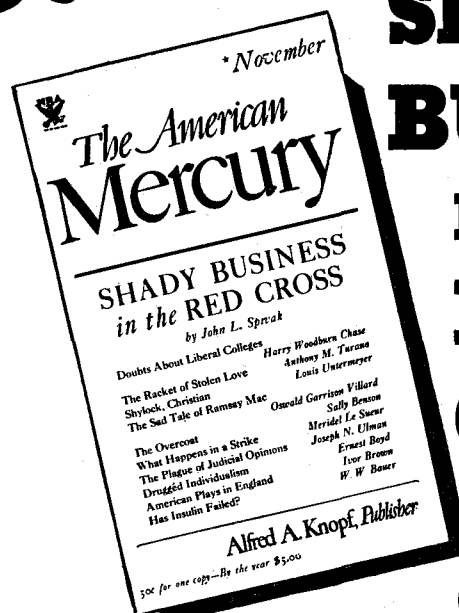
The death-rate from diabetes is on the increase in spite of the discovery of insulin in 1922. Dr. W. W. Bauer, director of the Bureau of Health and Public Instruction of the American Medical Association, tells why.

THE PLAGUE OF JUDICIAL OPINIONS

Joseph N. Ulman, an associate judge of the Supreme Bench of Baltimore City, attacks in this article our common law system with its attendant bedlam of precedents in judicial opinions, "a mass of printed pages that obscures thought, stifles initiative, stultifies its practitioners" and which if laid end to end in a single year "would reach from confusion to futility."

Sensational!

SHADY BUSINESS IN THE RED CROSS



Of all the sensational scoops in the field of journalism, this exposé in the November issue of **THE AMERICAN MERCURY** of a great public institution, supported almost wholly by contributions from millions of American men, women and children, will perhaps shock the American people the most.

The author, John L. Spivak, has unearthed a mass of information which casts a shadow upon "The Great Mother." He makes twenty serious charges against the Red Cross—charges buttressed by tremendous documentation from Red Cross and government reports and from admissions made by Judge John Barton Payne, its official head.

Mr. Spivak concludes that there is **SHADY BUSINESS IN THE RED CROSS**, and that the Congress of the United States, which chartered the organization, owes it to the American people who support it to make a thorough investigation of the Red Cross.

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The New York Times approves and applauds our Clean-up Campaign.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

In the August number of The Writer, a magazine for literary workers published in Boston, is an article on "The Literary Larcenists," by Alan Devoe, that should be brought to the attention of every aspiring author who has yet to learn his way about among editors and publishers. Mr. Devoe exposes the tricks by which certain racketeers seek to extract money from persons who are desirous of seeing their work in print and gives much sound advice as to how the aspirant for literary fame may avoid the pitfalls that are so carefully prepared for him. The gist of his advice is contained in the closing paragraph, which reads:

Above all, this: A successful writer is a paid professional man. Checks should come to him; beware all suggestions of payments in the opposite direction!

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Ida M. Tarbell, May 24th, speaking of THE WRITER: "It is the only practical magazine for writers."

Recent articles by: Harford Powel, Phyllis Bottome, Frederick Allen, André Maurois, Edward Weeks, Rebecca Hooper Eastman, Van Wyck Mason, Leonard Bacon, George Weiss, Jr., Ben Ames Williams. Coming: Hervey Allen.

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ADDRESS

OUR ROSTRUM

with their employment, as is now done with World War veterans?

Would General Butler agree to the payment to these workers of a pension of \$30 a month for total disability having no relation to their employment, as is now done with World War veterans?

Would General Butler have the United States spend hundreds of millions of dollars, as it has done for World War veterans, for the free treatment of former munitions workers for ailments having no relation to their employment? Would he have the United States Government erect homes for these workers, as it does for its World War veterans? Would the General object if these munitions workers demanded civil-service preference and agitated for years after the war for bonuses to "adjust" their wartime pay?

Edward J. Eisele; Quincy, Ill.

Smedley D. Butler says, "In the Spanish-American War they got prize money. When we captured vessels, the soldiers all got their share."

The sailors received prize money, but no soldier of the Spanish-American War received a penny of prize money.

The Spanish-American War cost us \$1,200,000,000, while we acquired property as a result of the war worth \$8,000,000,000 — a net profit of \$6,800,000,000.

If this were divided among the veterans of the Spanish-American War as prize money it would mean \$16,000 for every man who enlisted. Figuring interest at 4 per cent, this would now amount to \$32,000 for every Spanish War soldier.

If the original amount and accumulated interest were divided among the survivors of the War, they would each receive at least \$50,000.

The government could pay every Spanish-American War veteran a pension of \$100 a month and still be the winner by far in the transaction.

L. G. Georgios; Detroit, Mich.

I am one of those who had the misfortune to take an active part in the World War and know from actual experience the meaning of war. Is Mr. Butler exaggerating when he calls war the most vicious racket in the world? Not a bit. Anyone who saw active service in the World War or in any war, for that matter, will tell you that words are inadequate to express the horrors and anguish of it. I can never forget the revulsion of feeling I experienced on the front when I saw men driven like a flock of sheep to be slaughtered in cold blood by invisible machine guns. My eyes were opened to the stupidity and futility of the whole thing, and there and then I determined if I ever returned alive to fight for the abolition of this unspeakable crime.

Is there any glory connected with war?

Any thrills and adventures that tend to compensate for the hardships and dangers of it? Possibly there are for a few generals who stay at a safe distance from the front lines, who receive decorations from their governments, whose names appear in print, and whom an ignorant public acclaims as heroes. For the common soldier, however, there is nothing but back-breaking marches, hunger, filth, anguish, mutilation, and death.

I heartily concur with the opinion of Mr. Butler, that the most effective way to abolish war is to take profit out of it. But who is there to force conscription of capital in this country. Our public leaders? We have lost faith in them and do not expect from them anything worth while. We feel that they have neither the character nor the courage to oppose the industrialists, the bankers, and other parasites deriving profits from wars. We suspect that the main and uppermost object in their minds is not how to serve us — the people — but how to protect and advance their own selfish interests and those of their group.

And our teachers and newspapers? Unhappily they, too, are wont to do lip service to a system that imposes on them the onerous duty of teaching and perpetuating the falsehood that it is unpatriotic and blasphemous to speak against war; that it is our duty when war breaks out, no matter how or why, to take up arms and march forward to kill and be killed.

I believe the task belongs and should be undertaken by the American Legion. Its members know from actual experience what war is. They know its horrors, its agony, its squalor. They have experienced its barbarity and ruthlessness. They know its effect upon their bodies and minds. Could there be a more noble cause than the cause of saving future generations from the horrors which they faced?

Instead of wasting their time in parades and futile debates about hundred-per-cent Americanism, let them concentrate on the problem of war. Let them be the teachers, the molders of public opinion. Let them blaze the trail, the trail that will lead to universal peace.

Not before public opinion is aroused and the insanity of war is fully realized can we hope for its abolition. The average man thinks deeply and feels strongly, but he is inarticulate. He does not know what to do about it.

The American Legion has a wonderful opportunity for action. It can do more than any other body of men that I can think of. However, in order to attain results, it needs an active, militant, bold leadership. It needs men of vision, men of courage, men of sincerity who will not be afraid to face opposition or even ridicule. It needs, and needs badly, leaders of Mr. Butler's type.

THE FORUM AND • CENTURY



HENRY GODDARD LEACH, *Editor*

Next Month

and later

BETWEEN COVERS — I

Lowell Brentano

Mr. Brentano, for fifteen years editorial executive of the house that bears his name, gives us an inside glimpse of the publishing business and his own impressions, gleaned from personal and business relationships, with a long series of celebrities — among them George Bernard Shaw, Mae West, Gene Tunney, and the late Calvin Coolidge. The first of three installments.

SCIENCE AND THE CRIMINAL

Henry Morton Robinson

Many persons think that only in detective novels exist those faintly fabulous aids to criminal pursuit which have been called "lie detectors," "truth serums," and so forth. But they do exist — and are in actual use to-day. Mr. Robinson describes them and tells why evidence so obtained cannot be heard in courts of law.

THE INVISIBLE WAR

Oliver Williams

That the protective tariff is a form of industrial suicide is the author's contention. While we think we use

it to war in trade with foreign nations, he says, we are really squeezing the life blood from our own strong industries in a vain effort to protract the puny lives of our weak ones.

I WAS A RICH MAN'S SON

Croswell Bowen

"You can catalogue me as one of those young men who have 'had advantages.' To-day I am barely managing to keep the dispossess notice away from my apartment door. I eat because I am still invited out to dinner and I still wear the suits and overcoats Abe Rosenberg made for me five years ago when I was a gay undergraduate. I have learned that not only does the world not owe you a living but it expects you to fight like hell for the chance to make a living."

THE NEW AMERICA

Katherine Glover

Down at Muscle Shoals the United States Government is going forward with perhaps the greatest of the New Deal experiments, and this experiment has prompted Miss Glover to exclaim: "A new world

begins in the Tennessee Valley!" The story of that valley, she says, will be the story of power — but of power for people and not for profits. If you think that the New Deal is primarily a political solution of political problems you should not miss this article.

WHAT IF WE ARE "PSYCHIC"?

J. B. Rhine

Professor Rhine's paper in this issue describes a series of experiments at Duke University tending to show that humans are actually, in some way or other, subject to those perceptions we have called clairvoyance and telepathy. Next month he will discuss what these discoveries may mean when their nature is more fully understood.

OTHER FEATURES

Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, wife of the Chinese War Lord, relates her experiences with her husband's army in pursuit of communist and bandit armies. Mary M. Colum resumes her series of articles on contemporary literature. Koni Fine gives us a moving short story, "The Birthday."

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DUTTON BOOKS



THE BOOK PARADE

BY EDITH H. WALTON



R. E. LEE, by Douglas Southall Freeman (Scribner, 2 vols., \$7.50). It may surprise, and should disturb, the mushroom tribe of slipshod biographers to know that Dr. Freeman has worked for nineteen years on this biography of Robert E. Lee and that two more volumes are yet to come. As a result he has produced a life that is definitive, incredibly complete and authentic in detail, and still warmly appealing in its treatment of a man who had less than the normal allotment of human weakness. These first two volumes end with the battle of Chancellorsville in 1863, and therefore a large proportion of their pages is given over to Lee's earlier years and to a patient building up of those traits of character and that mental capacity which fitted him for his great task. When he actually comes to the Civil War Dr. Freeman tells the story from the southern, from Lee's, point of view—in itself something of a novelty. His book is a work of major importance, and there can be no doubt that the succeeding volumes will be of equal caliber.

"NOT I, BUT THE WIND . . .", by Frieda Lawrence (Viking, \$2.75). After the gossip and wrangling of his importunate women friends—notably Mabel Dodge Luhan and Dorothy Brett—these calm, ingratiating memoirs by his own wife cast a light of steady sanity on the story of D. H. Lawrence. Frieda Lawrence disdains to strike back at those who have belittled her, nor is this simple, honest account of her marriage embarrassingly intimate. She tells the plain facts—how she, a member of the German nobility, deserted her English husband and her children to run off with Lawrence; how they fought frequently; how, in spite of differences and the intrusion of others, they were always passionately linked—but throughout the book her own personality is subordinated to that of Lawrence. She prints innumerable of his letters; sets down the record of their far wanderings in Europe, New Mexico, and the East; proclaims again and again her eager faith in Lawrence's genius. Despite her deliberate self-effacement, the charm and staunchness of Frieda's own character come through unmistakably, and, in reading her book, one feels that this, at last, is the truth.

ROMAN SPRING MEMORIES, by Mrs. Winthrop Chanler (Little, Brown, \$3.00). A half sister of F. Marion Crawford, the niece of Julia Ward Howe, Margaret Chanler spent her childhood in a baroque Roman *palazzo* splendid with mirrors and

old brocade. Her artist father, an American expatriate, appears to have known everyone of importance in Rome, and as a young girl during the 'seventies and 'eighties she led an enchanted existence which culminated in the balls, cotillions, and musicales of her first few seasons. After her marriage (to a member of the Astor family) Mrs. Chanler left Rome for America, where she learned to know Newport, Tuxedo, Washington, and the New York of Ward McAllister. Washington was where she felt most at home, and she found her place there in the famous group that included the Roosevelts, the Lodges, Henry Adams, and John La Farge. For her, however, no city had the magic of Rome, and her whole book is wistful with nostalgia for those bright early days. Like Edith Wharton's recent autobiography, *Roman Spring Memories* offers an invaluable record of a social world that is now dead. Candid and charming, it fulfills all the requirements of a first-rate book of memoirs.

THE EXECUTIONER WAITS, by Josephine Herbst (Harcourt, Brace, \$2.50). A sequel to *Pity Is Not Enough* and the second volume of a trilogy, this novel continues the story of the Trexlers, a middle-class American family which has fallen by the wayside in the pioneer race for power and success. Anne Wendel, born a Trexler, can never be persuaded that the family fortunes will not be restored, but her adventurous daughters—who wander across the country from one wretched job to another—come to question the dominant American assumptions by which their elders live. The period covered is 1918 to 1929; the scene, predominantly, is Iowa and the Far West; the characters include middle-class people of many professions and philosophies. Miss Herbst is especially good at recreating the days following the war, full of strikes, unrest, and I.W.W. agitation, and is always fully alive to the implications of her story of failure. Mature, generous in scale, powerfully pessimistic, *The Executioner Waits* is an important novel.

PEACE WITH HONOUR, by A. A. Milne (Dutton, \$2.00). There is nothing Winnie the Pooh about this rather surprising little book—as complete and cutting a denunciation of war as ever ripped up stale arguments with the blade of common sense. Mr. Milne is against war of any kind, including defensive if there is such a thing, and he is in no doubt as to what

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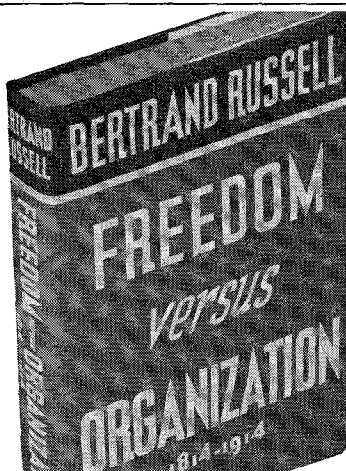


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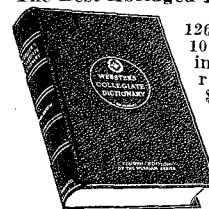
THE BOOK PARADE

will happen to the world if his seemingly Utopian suggestions are ignored. His bland dismissal of economics, trade rivalries, class tension is naturally disconcerting, but he makes up for these blind spots by as shrewd an attack on the conventional arguments for militarism as the most sober-minded could ask. His contemptuous handling of the myth of "national prestige" is alone worth the price of the book.

CITY EDITOR, by Stanley Walker (Stokes, \$3.00). Despite conscientious words of discouragement scattered here and there, this book will manifestly act as a stimulant on young men and women who dream vaguely of newspaper work. Stanley Walker, himself surprisingly young, is *City Editor* of the *New York Herald-Tribune* and a fanatic for his job. He delights in retelling fine, swaggering yarns of the old timers and of their modern counterparts, and his terse, crackling, hard-headed pages are packed with inside information about the workings of a great newspaper. There are chapters on the sports page, on the enterprising camera men, on the copy desk, on women reporters, on the "nightmare of libel." All Mr. Walker's points are livened by concrete examples, anecdotes, sketches of bizarre personalities, and his book has such zest and humor that one can forgive his slighting of the major issues entangled in the freedom of the press. For sheer entertainment value *City Editor* belongs in the first rank.

LIGHTSHIP, by Archie Binns (Reynal & Hitchcock, \$2.50). Justly labeled one of the "discoveries" of the year, *Lightship* is a fine, forcefully written, and highly original novel. It is a story of a crew of men pursuing their monotonous and lonely tasks on a lightship stationed off the reefs near Seattle. Much of it is told in the present tense — anecdotes and adventures aboard ship, transcripts of racy conversations about religion and women, descriptions of daily routine — but the true richness and flavor of the book derive from the separate life stories of the crew, which Mr. Binns weaves deftly into his larger pattern. These men come from far Scandinavia, from the New York slums, from the plains; and the reasons for their final drifting to the lightship are as various as their own characters. Mr. Binns' novel has beauty, strangeness, and vigor. It is amazingly good.

THE AGE OF CONFIDENCE, by Henry Seidel Canby (Farrar & Rinehart, \$2.50). The complacent 'nineties, viewed with a certain amount of nostalgia and with the critical realism of later years by one who enjoyed them as a boy in Wilmington, Delaware, are at last accorded the sort of



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THE BOOK PARADE

study they deserve. It was a period of cultural calm before the stormy years of the twentieth century set in — a period when home was "the most impressive experience in life"; when society was a blend of traditional decorum, responsibility, friendliness, and stuffy respectability; when education was "respectable but not well understood"; when religion, like business and politics, had turned *laissez-faire*. Dr. Canby defends it without vehemence, criticizes it with tolerance. "The time has come," he says, "to think of the 'nineties as something more than a bad, small-town joke." *The Age of Confidence* is a sincere and charming document proudly defending this statement.

TENTS IN MONGOLIA, by Henning Haslund (Dutton, \$5.00). Back in the early 'twenties a group of young Danes decided to establish a farming colony and fur-trading post in the farthest wilderness of northern Mongolia. Written with charm and modesty, this record of their adventures and hardships has a wildly picaresque flavor. While pursuing their scientific ends, Mr. Haslund and his companions encountered witch doctors, mysterious lamas, robber princesses, and other strange folk who inhabit the nomadic regions of central Asia. They courted death again and again, and Mr. Haslund himself, on a rash venture across the Siberian border, had an unpleasant experience as a prisoner of the Soviet. This is a completely enthralling book — the more so because Mr. Haslund does not romanticize but lets his story speak for itself.

WE ACCEPT WITH PLEASURE, by Bernard DeVoto (Little, Brown, \$2.50). With somewhat baffling implications, Mr. DeVoto has built his clever, perverse novel about four men in their thirties who have been to Harvard together and later overseas. Their shared experience of war is a dominant *motif* in their lives, and they find themselves floundering and ill-at-ease in a peacetime world. Most of them are Boston Brahmins, tortuously concerned because they seem to be making so little of their early promise, and all of them are forced to content themselves ironically with the half loaf prescribed by their limitations. The book is frequently brilliant, though always a little tricky, but its philosophy is neither so civilized nor so mature in its insidious defeatism as Mr. DeVoto would have one believe.

JOHN BROWN: TERRIBLE "SAINT," by David Karsner (Dodd, Mead, \$3.00). Mr. Karsner has wisely refrained from assigning John Brown a definite place in the hierarchy of American immortals. He has chosen, instead, the more difficult task of assembling from the mass of conflicting

THE BOOK PARADE

evidence a portrait faithful to the facts. How far he has succeeded in this task is indicated by his pronounced ability to polish the facts into uniformly crisp reflections of John Brown's enigmatic character.

THREE MEN DIE, by Sarah Gertrude Millin (Harper, \$2.50). If encroachments on their territory continue, the mystery mongers will have to draw up a code. Mrs. Millin's new novel is not a detective story, but it is just as engrossing as if it had diagrams and sleuths. Her Julia, a quiet, acquisitive, tensely determined little woman, poisons two husbands and a son before she is caught, and all in a small-town, South African setting incongruously commonplace. Julia's psychological make-up could have been clarified a mite better, but her cool, competent methods, the slow dawning of suspicion among her neighbors are handled so brilliantly that the book has a horrid fascination which defies detailed criticism.

FEBRUARY HILL, by Victoria Lincoln (Farrar & Rinehart, \$2.50). A grand comic yarn, not untouched with pathos, of a scandalous, harum-scarum family which lives in a shanty near Fall River, *February Hill* is as fresh and funny as they come. Pa is a Harvard graduate and a sot; Minna, his wife, brings in the money by means of genteel excursions with gentlemen friends; Grandma is a rouged, bewigged, and valiant old war horse; the children, in various fashions, are true products of their sketchy environment. Endlessly inventive, insouciant, alive, this first novel is in a class by itself.

NAOMI MITCHISON'S VIENNA DIARY (Smith & Haas, \$2.00). After the lamentable civil war in Austria last February, the English Labor Party sent a number of its members to Vienna to investigate conditions among the luckless Austrian Socialists and to distribute relief funds where they would do the most good. The novelist Naomi Mitchison was one of these emissaries, and her informal, day-by-day diary covers a month of heartbreaking experience among people who had lost everything, including hope. She arrived so soon after the fighting that the bullet scars were still fresh in the wrecked workers' apartments, and the destitute families which she interviewed were still threatened by police brutality. Her book would be better if it were less casual, jumbled, and cluttered with personal irrelevancies, but it has the immediacy of first impressions and a fine freshness of indignation which might have been lost in rewriting.

MY NEXT BRIDE, by Kay Boyle (Harcourt, Brace, \$2.50). Beautifully deft and delicate, and therefore characteristic of

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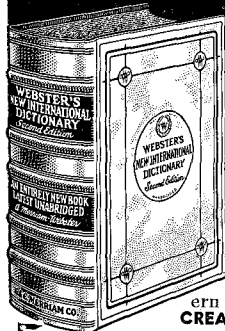
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Kay Boyle, this is the story of a young American girl, penniless in Paris, who joins the weird colony of a Messianic artist-dancer. (Miss Boyle has obviously heard of Raymond Duncan.) Victoria's first, fatal experience of love is dubiously synthetic, but the outlandish members of the colony are described with irresistible irony and humor. The book is slight, charming, and pleasantly mad.

BLACK GOD, by D. Manners-Sutton (Longmans, Green, \$2.50). This is the tale of M'Kato, who loses his hands quarreling with an unpleasant plantation owner named Brown and then sits beside a small river in the Congo to think it over. Years pass. Drums throb in the jungle; white men prosper and corrupt the natives; and in some obscure way Brown's violent end is induced by M'Kato's meditations. It all seems to prove that if an African broods long enough almost anything may happen.

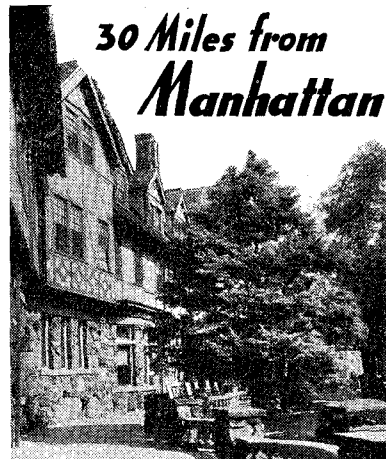
THE BACKWASH OF WAR, by Ellen N. La Motte (Putnam, \$2.00). It is easy to understand why these stories by an American nurse were suppressed during the war. They describe far too truthfully for the interests of war propagandists the human wreckage that was carried off the battlefield into the squalor of a French field hospital — some of it to be patched and sent back to the trenches; some of it to be mended and sent home, hideous triumphs of surgery; some of it to die in frightful agony. This reprint deserves a place beside another great war book, William March's *Company K*.

SEED OF ADAM, by Violet Campbell (Dutton, \$2.50). A curious, raggedly uneven novel, extremely powerful at times and echoing unmistakably the darker scenes from Dickens, *Seed of Adam* is the story of a warped and brutal murderer whose destiny is most surprisingly linked with that of a wealthy and well-born English family. Coincidence is grossly overworked, melodrama rampant, but Miss Campbell succeeds in establishing a tense, lowering atmosphere which prepares one for occasional flamboyance.

THE GOLDEN VANITY, by Isabel Paterson (Morrow, \$2.50). A crisp, witty story of New York during the boom, the crash, and the depression and of three women — cousins oddly disparate in temperament — who struggle vainly for happiness in the hurly-burly. Mysie, an actress and the most interesting of the three, is the mouthpiece for those aphorisms and astringent comments which give Mrs. Paterson's novels their flavor.

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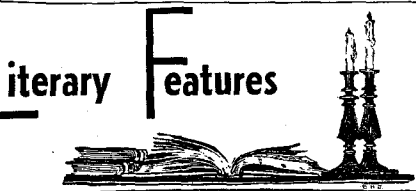
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WHEN YELLOW LEAVES, by Ethel Boileau (Dutton, \$2.50). Frankly misty-eyed over the passing of gentlemanly England, the author of *A Gay Family* has written a smoothly sentimental tale about aristocracy in decay. Resigned to the sale of his ancestral home, Sir Anthony Vane could not survive its seizure by a villainous vulgarian from Chicago. The intervention of a beautiful American actress, his son's fiancée, comes too late to avert tragedy but not too late, fortunately, to vindicate the honor of America. This is a noble little book, with enough talk of loyalties to remind one of Galsworthy.

AT SEA, by Arthur Calder-Marshall (Scribner, \$2.00). A curious novel, distinctly a *tour de force*, this is the story of a young couple stranded at sea in a small, open boat during the second day of marriage. One oar lost, the seaside resort where they are staying only a few miles away, the two drift through a night of horror during which their new relationship is drastically modified by the threat of death. Psychologically the situation is both interesting and deftly handled, but there is a clinical tinge to the tale which has a slightly dehumanizing effect.

CANDY, by L. M. Alexander (Dodd, Mead, \$2.50). This very ingratiating novel, which won the \$10,000 prize in the Dodd, Mead competition, is one of those stories which minimize the darker, more sordid aspects of the Negro problem. Until trouble comes, life at Mimosa Hill — a big cotton plantation in South Carolina — has a childlike, idyllic charm, and the Negroes who work for their "Little King" feel an affection and loyalty for him reminiscent of ante-bellum days. Most loyal of them all is Candy, a glowing, magnetic young woman who has been frankly promiscuous but who prides herself that she has never loved more than one man at a time. When a number of the Negroes are lured from home by the beckoning delights of Harlem, Candy is scornful of their ingratitude and folly; when the plantation is sold because of hard times, Candy is the last and most reluctant to leave. Mrs. Alexander's novel moves swiftly and dramatically and abounds in engaging characters. Unquestionably it is superficial, but it makes exceedingly pleasant reading.

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Before me, a Notary Public, in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared HENRY GODDARD LEACH, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Editor of THE FORUM and Century and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, to wit:

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